Problems of Communism

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The USSR Since Stalin: Trends and Portents

At first glance, the situation in the USSR since Stalin's death seems to consist of a host of conflicting elements: economic concessions coupled with increased political controls; an amnesty followed by the reestablishment of the death penalty; bilateral agreements entered into with individual countries to the accompaniment of shrill attacks upon sundry unnamed "enemies of peace"—to mention only a few.

To explain this puzzling picture, we should perhaps bear in mind first, the legacy which Stalin left to his successors—a fear-ridden populace, a deteriorating agriculture, a world united in its determination to resist any further Soviet expansion—and second, the unprecedented degree of nervousness that existed in the Soviet leadership immediately after Stalin's death (evidenced, *inter alia*, by its appeals against "panic" and "confusion"). When the dust settled, however, it became clear that the regime was still firmly in the saddle, even though its problems were as acute as before. Relative political stability was maintained despite the subsequent purges; and it became possible to tackle Stalin's legacy in a more systematic and organized fashion. There could be no full-scale return to Stalinism—that much was certain. The regime was neither powerful enough nor, indeed, desirous of resorting to brute force, coercion and terror. Consequently, it embarked upon a policy designed to alleviate the internal and external situation without endangering its power *vis-à-vis* its own subjects and the world at large.

The events of the past three years, then, may best be understood by keeping in mind the regime's wish to pursue a *rational* policy best calculated to improve its position at home and abroad. The peasants were granted some material incentives in the hope of increasing their productivity; at the same time, political controls in the countryside were tightened, albeit not as harshly as before. The secret police was "put in moth balls" for the time being, yet no one would seriously suggest that the citizen has been granted rights approaching those enjoyed by citizens of democratic states. Soviet writers have been permitted to give freer vent to their artistic proclivities; the principle of party supervision over the arts, however, has yet to be questioned.

The "conflicting elements" thus become less conflicting. For there exists no *essential* contradiction between proclaiming one's desire for "peace" and attacking "certain countries" for nefarious opposition to it. And it only *appears* confusing to see the Soviets speak of Marxist-Leninist principles in statistics while adopting, in practice, mathematical principles which have nothing whatsoever to do with dialectical materialism. The Russian "bear," after all, has turned out to be a rather astute animal. He has adopted more adroit tactics in an attempt to have his cake and eat it too. This, perhaps, is the most important lesson to be drawn from the articles below.

—The Editors

The Time Factor in Soviet Foreign Policy

By ANDREW HAVEN

POST-STALIN Soviet foreign policy shows both similarities to and marked departures from its Stalinist forerunner. Certainly the overt hostility which characterized Soviet attitudes and actions toward the non-Communist world under Stalin has given place to a foreign policy which is more flexible and superficially less intransigent, propounded—at least until recently—with an air of polite reasonableness. Right up to the Foreign Ministers' Conference at Geneva in October–November there were many who thought that Moscow's outwardly more amenable approach to international problems was not just a shift in the party line, but the result of a genuine desire of the new Soviet rulers to bury some of the past. Even the abortive conference, which clearly showed that the USSR was not prepared to abandon the fundamentals of its policy, was less acrimonious

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Andrew Haven is the joint pseudonym of two British journalists who have contributed a number of studies on international communism to various reviews, including *The World Today*, *Contemporary Review*, and *British Survey*.

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than other East-West conferences prior to 1953. The Soviets appeared to have realized that a determined stand need not be accompanied by bad manners.

In the days of Stalin, Soviet foreign policy at times came dangerously close to starting a war in which the USSR would have found itself actively involved. At present one of the main objectives of Soviet policy appears to be to avoid war, particularly as the Soviet economy needs much more time before it can match Western production. Stalin's heirs accordingly decided on an immediate relaxation of East-West tension, in order to adjust the temperature of the international climate to suit their needs. As a result of the new Moscow line the danger of war has certainly receded, but real peace has not been brought any nearer.

Foreign Policy Under Stalin

AS long as Stalin was alive, he was undisputed master of the Soviet government and the party Politburo—his colleagues were only the executants of his will. It is impossible to say to what extent he heeded their advice, but it is certain that none dared to oppose him once his decision had been made known. The ruthless and single-minded determination with which Stalin applied brute force to eliminate all opposition to his policies shocked world opinion during the land collectivization drive and the purges of the 1930's. The same qualities characterized his attitude to foreign political problems. His native cunning was a great help to him: not only did he manage to deceive Western leaders, but even such Marxist luminaries as Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev fell prey to his wiles and steadfastness of purpose.

Although Stalin's foreign policy paid great dividends in the fluid years during and after World War II, the growing understanding of his intentions in the West made it more and more difficult for him to add to his successes. He continued his policy of force even after the 1948 *coup d'état* in Czechoslovakia had strengthened the free world's resolve to unite for its own defense. Only a few months later he was checked both in Berlin and Belgrade. Being an old man in a hurry and determined to further the cause of Communist expansion, he refused to draw the correct conclusions from these failures, and turning away from Europe, proceeded to apply the same policy of force in Korea.

At the time of Stalin's death the usefulness of his policy to communism had obviously been exhausted. His departure from the scene enabled his successors to reintroduce an element of flexibility in the direction of Soviet foreign affairs without abandoning the perpetual aim of all Communist policies: the revolutionary transformation of social systems throughout the world.

Malenkov's New Course

THE "collective leadership" which succeeded Stalin in March 1953 was faced with two sets of problems. Its immediate task was to ensure the smooth transition from Stalin's one-man dictatorship to its own form of government, while its broader aim was to consolidate the economic and political position of the USSR and of communism. Its members believed that the "revolutionary situation" which—in the Communist view—had developed in many parts of the world as a result of World War II (and which had been fully exploited by communism) had come to an end and that a period of consolidation was indicated.[1]

Soviet foreign policy is, of course, an integral part of Communist policy as a whole. It follows that economic developments in the USSR and other Communist-ruled countries not only have a direct bearing on Soviet foreign policy, but also provide a clue to its motives and an indication of its future trends.

Having buried Stalin, the new Soviet government proceeded to dissociate itself from some of the worst excesses of the Stalin era. Malenkov launched his new course with promises of improved supplies of consumer goods and greater material incentives to the peasants. A limited amnesty was granted and a certain liberalization of the arts and sciences took place. The subsequent liquidation of Beria and diminution in the power of the MVD was not only an attempt to remove the man who personified the most feared and hated aspect of Soviet life under Stalin, but also the outcome of the backstage conflict of personalities and the struggle for survival within the collective leadership. Beria's exceptional power made him a constant threat to the very existence of his partners who, irrespective of their differences of opinion and varying ambitions, apparently were united in their determination to get rid of him.

[1] According to Lenin, a revolutionary situation comes about when the ruling classes of capitalist countries are no longer capable of ruling and when the oppressed workers are no longer willing to be ruled by them. (*Cf.* Lenin, "Left Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder," 1920, in his *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947, Vol. II, p. 621.) Some have argued that such a situation existed in Eastern Europe immediately after the war, yet the Communists themselves have admitted that their successful seizure of power in the satellite countries was due primarily to the presence and assistance of the Soviet Army.

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The immediate purpose of the numerous decrees and directives issued during 1953 was to create the impression, both at home and abroad, that the lot of the Soviet people would be improved by developing the economic potential of the USSR along more peaceful lines. These internal measures were skilfully blended with a great deal of propaganda propounding the desirability and advantages of peaceful coexistence. It is difficult to judge to what extent the Soviet people themselves thought that a new era had dawned, but there is no doubt that this policy paid dividends in the international field. Many people throughout the world were keen to give the new Soviet leaders the benefit of the doubt and the time for which they were playing. This, then, was the first major success of post-Stalin Soviet foreign policy.

German Rearmament and its Aftermath

FOR many years the Western Allies had tried hard to evolve a suitable formula for the rearmament of West Germany. These efforts met with much opposition, particularly from countries which had experienced the hardships of German invasion and occupation. At the time of Stalin's death the concept of a European Defense Community had become more or less acceptable to the United States' European allies, but the new course in the USSR provided the opponents of EDC with a plausible excuse to advocate delay. As a result the plan went down to defeat before the factionalism of the French National Assembly.

This, however, was a Pyrrhic victory for Soviet foreign policy. The rearmament of West Germany was postponed, thus prolonging the breathing space granted to the USSR, but on the other hand the West was compelled to seek a more workable solution of the problem, which it found in making the Federal Republic a partner in NATO through its membership in the West European Union.

The obvious resolve of the West to press on with plans to protect itself against the possibility of Soviet aggression, irrespective of the failure of the EDC project, was one of the reasons which led the Soviet leaders to abandon their new course at home.

Another reason was the opposition of a segment of Soviet leadership to the basic premise of the Malenkov program. Contrary to a common misconception that the new course was intended to boost light industry at the expense of heavy industry, Malenkov and his supporters held merely that the rate of Soviet heavy industrial development was sufficient to provide a sound economic foundation for the expansion of agriculture and consumer goods production.[2] The opponents of this view argued that heavy industry had not yet reached the level at which the economy could support even relatively preferential allocations for light industry. Whether or not either view was right, embarkation on the new course did set into sharp relief some fundamental weaknesses of Soviet industry in comparison with the West—as Marshal Bulganin's speech before the Central Committee of the party last July so clearly revealed [3]—and provided another reason for abandoning the program. Finally, the continuing crisis in Soviet agriculture clinched the determination of Khrushchev & Co. to do away with short-term palliatives such as offered by Malenkov's program.[4]

In short the Soviet leaders who succeeded Malenkov abandoned the new economic policy at home because they believed that the preservation of their system, and the success of Communist policies at home and abroad, called for the further strengthening of the Soviet economy, primarily its heavy industry. On the other hand, they have continued the new course in foreign policy precisely because it allows the USSR to gain more time for consolidating control at home while wooing new allies abroad. This play for time, as well as the connection between Soviet domestic and international policies, cannot be overemphasized. It must be borne in mind that some of the tasks the Communists have set themselves—*e.g.*, the industrialization of China and the integration of the economies of all Communist-ruled countries—require much time before they can be expected to yield any results.[5]

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[2] For a full discussion of the Malenkov program, see L. Herman's article, "Soviet Economic Policies Since Stalin's Death," on p. 8.—Editors.

[3] One of the most interesting of Bulganin's complaints, in this context, was that "technology in the capitalist countries is not stationary and that, under the influence of the arms race, of competition and of the capitalist proclivity to chase after maximum profits, it has moved forward in a number of special fields. It is our task to surpass the achievements of foreign science and technology by making use of the advantages of our system." (*Pravda*, July 17, 1955.) For more information on Bulganin's address, see L. Herman, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[4] For a thorough discussion of the agricultural situation since Stalin's death, see L. Volin, "Report on the Agricultural Front," *Problems of Communism*, No. 6, November–December 1955.

[5] Satellite leaders have stressed the importance of Soviet bloc economic cooperation recently. For example, Gheorghiu-Dej of Rumania wrote in *Pravda*, November 2, 1955: "The level of industrial production reached in the socialist camp creates conditions for the development of economic cooperation directed towards specialization."

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"Compromises" Without Concessions

JUST as the new course in internal policies had been misinterpreted by many foreign observers as representing primarily the slowing down of heavy industrial development, so other more dangerous misconceptions exist with regard to the new look of Soviet foreign policy. Communist doctrine and in particular the slogan of the ultimate triumph of communism did not die with Stalin. Admittedly a number of minor concessions have been made by the USSR since March 1953. None of them, however, can be taken to imply that the basic line of communism has been thrown overboard. On the contrary all of them were designed for the purpose of enhancing the international prestige of the USSR and making the West appear more reluctant than the Soviets to solve existing problems in a spirit of mutual trust and goodwill.

The most spectacular *volte face* was executed over Yugoslavia. In allowing the Tito-Cominform dispute to come into the open, the Moscow leadership under Stalin had let itself be branded by a fellow-Communist as a violator of the rights of small nations. For the first time it was unable to browbeat an important ideological heretic. Aware of Stalin's miscalculation, his successors decided to make the best of a bad bargain. By placing the blame on Beria, who was in no position to answer back, Khrushchev and Bulganin thought they had found a way of extricating themselves from a situation which had caused them persistent embarrassment They also hoped that their rapprochement with Tito might give them a chance to weaken Yugoslavia's ties with the West and to create a good impression abroad. However, the long-term effect on the East European satellites, which were forced to follow yet another change in the party line, may well be a feeling of envy and the realization that under certain circumstances heresy can become profitable.

In their dealings with other countries, however, it must be said that the Soviet leaders have been relatively successful in keeping the diplomatic initiative since Stalin's death. In the belief that time is on their side, the Soviets pursue a foreign policy with the immediate threefold aim of avoiding a full-scale war, holding on to what they have got and increasing their influence wherever possible. In order to obscure the issue and mindful of President Eisenhower's statement that deeds and not words were required of them, Soviet leaders took a number of steps all designed to illustrate their avowed desire to coexist peacefully.

The fighting in the Far East was stopped; but at Panmunjom the Communists did not yield an inch of territory, while at Geneva they were able to consolidate their gains in Indochina. On both occasions they put themselves forward as the architects of peace and champions of the so-called national-liberation movements in Asia.

The Soviet withdrawal from Austria after ten years of obstinate occupation was generally welcomed and widely accepted as yet more proof of the USSR's peaceful intentions. It should not be overlooked, however, that the Soviet leaders were to blame for the prolonged occupation of Austria and that the terms finally settled upon in the Austrian State Treaty had been available to them for many years. Their illogical insistence on linking the Austrian problem with that of Germany, an attitude which they maintained as recently as the 1954 Berlin Conference of Foreign Ministers, had made nonsense of their peaceful protestations and had provided an illustration of the USSR's complete disregard of the rights of small nations. By leaving Austria the Russians have made their only real concession to date, and even that is not as important as Soviet propaganda tries to make out.

Moves such as the abandonment of the Soviet base at Porkkala in Finland and the reduction of Soviet and satellite armed forces—which incidentally released much needed manpower for the Soviet bloc economy without materially affecting the overwhelming numerical superiority of its armies—cannot seriously be regarded as concessions of substance. They do, however, make it possible for Soviet propaganda to challenge the USA to give up its foreign bases.

The Talks at the Summit

THE over-all effect of all these steps has been to leave the Soviet empire intact and to create a state of opinion which made it difficult for Western statesmen to penetrate the fog of public optimism. In deference to widespread hopes that a genuine rapprochement could be achieved, Western leaders agreed to a four-power parley at the summit, duly held at Geneva last July.

The unhappy fact, however, is that the Geneva conference solved nothing. Those who thought that personal contacts at the summit would be more effective than negotiations through normal diplomatic channels must now realize that the Communists never confuse the transient pleasantries of the big occasion with the permanent factors of power politics. President Eisenhower's achievement in convincing foe, friend and neutralist alike of America's sincere abhor-

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rence of war was the one positive advantage derived by the West from the summit talks. Bulganin and Khrushchev returned from Geneva with the knowledge that, by arranging yet another conference, they had gained more time. In refusing to discuss the status of the satellite states, the Soviets made it quite clear that any hopes the peoples of these countries might have reposed in the conference were illusory; here again time works to their advantage since their aim is to consolidate their hold over Eastern Europe.

The Middle East

SOVIET sincerity about relaxing international tension appears doubtful, to say the least, when viewed against the background of recent events in the Middle East. It cannot be disputed that Communist moves in that part of the world have created a new problem. Since the days of Palmerston, British foreign policy has aimed at preventing Russia from gaining a foothold in the Mediterranean, and since the last war the USA has realized the vital importance of keeping communism out of the Middle East. But Western policy is handicapped by the fact that at times it has not been able to keep pace with the national and social aspirations of the Middle Eastern peoples, which were effectively exploited by Communist propaganda.

The issue was further complicated by the emergence of the state of Israel. The primary aim of Western policy is to keep peace in the Middle East; yet this has been made more difficult by the speed with which the USSR used the Israeli-Arab situation to its own advantage. Free from the influence of public opinion and moral qualms, the Soviet planners can adapt flexibly to any situation with a singleness of purpose which the West cannot hope to rival. Thus, having initially encouraged Israel, the USSR simply switched its support to the Arab states when the latter course appeared to be the more profitable. The USSR can and does increase the danger of war in the Middle East by selling arms to one side in the dispute, and there appears to be little the West can do about it at this stage.

Naturally, the possibility of a Soviet-sponsored arms race in the Middle East has attracted a great deal of attention. At the same time Soviet moves to extend Communist influence and prestige in other parts of Asia must not be overlooked. Exchange visits on the highest level with such countries as India, Burma, and Afghanistan only spotlight the steady penetration which the Communists are attempting, particularly in the economic sphere.[6] All of these countries have been careful to point out that there are no political strings attached to their dealings with the Communists, and some of them are even applying repressive measures against local Communist parties. In this light, the blatant propaganda speeches delivered by Khrushchev and Bulganin in the course of their recent tour must have made the prospects of similar future visits less attractive to their hosts. Still, this observer cannot help calling to mind the sinister analogy of German economic penetration of the Balkans, which subsequently matured into economic dependence. Soviet leaders may well think that the comparatively small but coordinated steps they are now taking will yield far-reaching results in the future. Certainly the relative success of present Soviet tactics in the Middle East may confirm the views of those Communist planners who believe that they can further their cause without risk of open warfare. In this connection, too, time appears to be a primary objective of Soviet foreign policy.

The Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers

THE desire of the Soviet regime to maintain the international *status quo* in Europe in the hope that time would remain on its side was clearly demonstrated by the outcome of the four-power Foreign Ministers' Conference in Geneva. The Ministers met from October 27 to November 16 to fulfil the instructions issued by their heads of government to "propose effective means" for the solution of three problems: European security and German reunification, disarmament, and contacts between East and West.

Since the breakup of the wartime coalition, divided Germany has become the cockpit of the European cold war. As so many times before, failure to reach agreement on the future of Germany prevented the solution of the other items on the Geneva agenda. The Western Ministers refused to discuss European security before reaching agreement on this crucial issue, rightly regarding a divided Germany as one of the main threats to lasting peace in Europe. Molotov, on the other hand, held staunchly to the attitude

[6] It is impossible to list the various overtures made by the Communist countries toward the Asian states: items selected at random towards the end of 1955 include reports of Soviet offers to construct a steel plant in India, the visit of Czechoslovak trade delegations to Syria, Burma, Afghanistan and Egypt, study trips by Burmese mining experts to Czechoslovakia, a trade agreement between East Germany and Egypt, *etc.* The training of technical staffs from Asian nations in Communist countries is of the greatest importance.

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which has governed Soviet policy on East Germany since shortly after Potsdam—namely, absolute refusal to consider any compromise which might ultimately threaten or lessen Soviet control over the East German satellite. Even when the uprising in East Berlin and other towns of the Soviet zone in the summer of 1953 confirmed the detestation with which the Pieck puppet regime was regarded by the population, the brutal methods used by the Soviet authorities to quell the protest demonstrations showed that Moscow was determined to maintain its rule at all costs.

Molotov's cynical admission that the USSR was not prepared to have free elections throughout Germany—the *sine qua non* of all Western proposals for the settlement of the urgent German question—was nothing but a restatement of former Soviet policies. His verbal gymnastics on the pros and cons of free elections also serve to put into perspective the great divide between democracy as viewed by the free world and Communist "democracy." As has been rightly pointed out, the attitude of the USSR towards the so-called German Democratic Republic illustrates its determination to maintain domination over other nations.

Despite the dramatic suggestions on disarmament forwarded by President Eisenhower and by Marshal Bulganin at the summit conference, no progress on this issue was made by the Foreign Ministers. The question of effective control, without which any agreement on disarmament is worthless, again proved to be the stumbling block. For many years East and West had talked at cross purposes in various UN bodies. In line with the Communist "peace" campaign, the USSR has long used these negotiations as a sounding board for its propaganda against what it calls "weapons of mass destruction." Various proposals for the reduction of conventional armaments and forces went hand in hand with this campaign. The West has repeatedly stated its desire to disarm, if only the Soviets would agree to the effective control of any steps leading to arms reductions.

The Communists, of course, are well aware of the universal appeal of disarmament, and they have consistently taken advantage of it by launching one world-wide propaganda campaign after another. The sincerity of their policy can best be determined from their own words:

From time immemorial the idea of disarmament has been one of the most favored forms of diplomatic dissimulation

Soviet Phantasmagoria

GANDHI: The Rise of an "Outstanding Statesman"

1939: "Gandhism is . . . a reactionary force directed against the revolution of the popular masses."[1]

1950: "In a demagogical manner, Gandhi . . . preached class-peace with landowners and capitalists to Indian workers and peasants. . . . Gandhism has become the avowed national ideology of the Indian capitalists and landowners."[2]

1952: "Actually, Gandhi, this bellman of the Indian landlords, manufacturers and bankers, was an adversary of factories and machines only in words. The Indian bourgeoisie needed this demagogy in order to take over the mass movement."[3]

1954: "Gandhi never wanted India to gain full independence; his sole aim was to urge the imperialists to make concessions in favor of the exploited masses of India, to achieve the admission of the bourgeoisie and land-ocracy to the helm of power."[4]

AND TODAY:

1955: "Mahatma Gandhi . . . is highly esteemed [in the Soviet Union] as a renowned patriot and friend of the people. We pay due respect to his memory . . . We do not share the philosophical views of Gandhi, but we regard him as an outstanding statesman who made no mean contribution to the development of the peace-loving views of [the Indian] people and their struggle for independence."[5]

Sources: 1) Small Soviet Encyclopedia, 2nd Ed., Moscow, Vol. II, p. 930; 2) A. M. Dyakov, *India and Pakistan*, Moscow, p. 15; 3) *Modern History of the Countries of the Foreign East*, Moscow University, p. 300; 4) *Most Modern History of the Countries of the Foreign East*, Moscow, p. 172; 5) Bulganin in a speech at Bombay, reprinted in *Izvestia*, Moscow, November 26, p. 1.

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of the true motives and plans of those governments which have been seized by a sudden "love of peace." This phenomenon is very understandable. Any proposal for the reduction of armaments could invariably count upon broad popularity and support from public opinion.[7]

It is not really surprising that such major issues as Germany, European security and disarmament defied solution at Geneva. Even in the matter of East-West contacts, the Soviet attitude gave the lie to its professed hopes for closer ties. It seems that Molotov today still practices what Stalin preached over 40 years ago:

A diplomat's words must have no relation to his actions—otherwise what kind of diplomacy is it? Words are one thing, actions another. Good words are a mask for the concealment of bad deeds. Sincere diplomacy is no more possible than dry water or iron wood.[8]

At Geneva the Western Foreign Ministers submitted a memorandum in support of "the natural desire of men to understand each other." They advocated a program of action calling for the abolition of the censorship of press dispatches from the USSR and asking the Soviet authorities to allow Western journalists to have free access to the normal sources of information.[9] The memorandum also urged the USSR to abandon jamming of broadcasts and travel restrictions, to permit the free sale of all newspapers over the counter and to agree to the reciprocal setting up of information centers.

It must be admitted that since the death of Stalin more Soviet delegations, athletes and artists have visited non-Communist countries and similar facilities have been extended to their opposite numbers from the West. Presumably this will continue, but at Geneva Mr. Molotov made it quite clear that the USSR was not prepared to allow uncontrolled travel and a free exchange of ideas between East and West. He said in fact that any suggestions to this effect were nothing but "interference in the internal affairs of the USSR," serving the cause of "black reaction." He also claimed that information centers would serve as "spy centers."

Whereas the West is concerned with the development of human contacts and the free exchange of ideas, the Soviet representatives at Geneva assessed East-West contacts from a crudely materialistic viewpoint. There is little doubt that they were mainly interested in securing the removal of the embargo on strategic goods and in obtaining as much technical and scientific information as possible.[10]

Basically Molotov was content to return from Geneva without obtaining any concessions from the West. For the main aim of the USSR today is simply to preserve the *status quo* in Europe—that is, to write off further expansion in this area *for the time being*. The Soviets obviously prefer the perpetuation of the division of Germany to the risk of a united Germany's alignment with the West. Believing that time is with them, they are satisfied with holding on to their European possessions, particularly as the summit talks convinced them of the improbability of a preventive war against them. With their European rear secure they are now concentrating on extending their influence in other parts of the world, primarily in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Bulganin's and Khrushchev's antics in India, Burma and Afghanistan are the outward manifestation of this new emphasis in Soviet foreign policy.

But Geneva was not only to the USSR's advantage. The West has also come away with some gains. The conference has exposed the true character of Communist policy and has dispersed the fog which has been obscuring the judgment of many people the world over since Stalin's death and particularly after the meeting of the heads of state. The arrogant way in which Mr. Molotov shattered the world's hopes for a genuine relaxation of tensions may well cause a widespread revulsion against the Soviet tactics in the international arena.

So far the Soviets have found no reason to quarrel with Lenin's assessment of the time factor:

When dealing with world history one counts in decades. Ten or twenty years sooner or later makes no difference.[11]

The triumphant way in which Khrushchev boasted of the USSR's atomic weapons in his speech at Bangalore on November 26 would indicate that the Communists

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[7] E. V. Tarle: *Istoriia diplomatii* (History of Diplomacy), Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1945, Vol. III, pp. 708–709.

[8] J. V. Stalin: "Elections in Petersburg" (1913) *Sochineniia* (Works), Gospolitizdat, Moscow 1946, Vol. II, p. 277.

[9] In the Communist world the collecting of information on such harmless subjects as population statistics, consumer goods production, *etc.*, has at times been treated as a serious offense, as many a Western journalist has found to his cost.

[10] In his speech quoted above (*cf.* footnote 4), Bulganin called for Western technical information: "Everything new that is created in the world of science and technology must be constantly studied. Relations with scientific research establishments and progressive scientists in foreign countries should be expanded and the purchase of foreign technical literature increased." The past neglect of foreign progress had led Soviet research institutes to "spend time and money on discoveries and inventions already published in the foreign press and sometimes even in use abroad."

[11] Lenin: "Left-Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder," (1920), *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947, Vol. II, p. 599.

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are satisfied that they are putting time to good use. Their stand at Geneva, where they again refused to permit the free interflow of people and ideas, shows that they have no intention of allowing it to become a double-edged weapon. Communism can only continue to flourish in darkness, and the Soviet leaders do not want to give their opponents the opportunity to apply the time factor against themselves. They know that if enough Soviet people were given the opportunity to learn the truth about the relative merits of communism and democracy, they would, in time, become less willing to put up with the hardships and restrictions which are part and parcel of the Soviet system.

Soviet Economic Policy Since Stalin

By LEON M. HERMAN

IN THE economic sphere, developments in the USSR under Stalin's successors have been marked by a curious contradiction. Public affirmations of undiminished faith in Stalin's economic achievements and policies have continued side by side with a number of rather urgent official drives designed to correct the disproportions which those very policies had introduced into the economy of the Soviet Union. The task of adjusting to some of the economic imbalances inherited from Stalin has proven to be a complex as well as divisive undertaking. So many economic areas required prompt corrective measures that the question of the order of priority which they should be given gave rise to open disagreement among Stalin's successors within less than two years of his death.

The search for solutions to some of the more apparent ailments of the Soviet economy falls into two distinct phases. The first phase, lasting from March 1953 to February 1955, was marked by Malenkov's attempt to rationalize the Soviet economic process by increasing somewhat the share of the citizen in the fruits of his labor. Since February 1955, the task of adjusting the economy to the consequences of the Stalinist orgy of amassing industrial capital has been guided by the policies associated with the name of Khrushchev. The Khrushchev approach, in contrast to that of Malenkov, has been marked, in general, by an attempt to alleviate some of the major stresses in the economy without, as yet, allowing the public a substantial share in the benefits of expanding production.

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Experimenting With the "Light Touch"

BECAUSE of his long experience as a manipulator of the levers of economic control in the USSR, Malenkov undoubtedly was aware of the need for immediate reform in the operation of the economic apparatus. In his opinion, which was not challenged by any of his colleagues at the time he came to power, the Soviet economy had travelled far enough along the road of unrestrained accumulation of basic industrial power. Year after year 64 percent of all accumulated new capital had been invested in the expansion of those industries producing goods to be pumped back into the industrial process. Such an economy, Malenkov intimated, was quite secure against any serious drain through private consumption.[1] Moreover, he knew that the system of controls enabled the regime to call a halt to the expansion of consumption at any desired point and at any time that it chose.

It was fully apparent to Malenkov that the Stalin regime's rigid adherence to the policy of small and grudging allocations of new capital for expansion of consumer goods industries had tended to perpetuate the state of chronic shortages in all areas of consump-

[1] Malenkov's speech before the Supreme Soviet, August 8, 1953. *Pravda*, August 9, 1953.

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tion and, with it, the lopsided character of Soviet economic growth. He discerned, moreover, that only a slight concession away from this policy could produce impressive results from the consumer's standpoint. For example, a cut of less than 10 percent in new funds set aside each year for heavy industry would enable the government to double the amount of investment capital available for the expansion of light industries. Similarly, a reduction of the military budget by only some 15 billion rubles (about 13 percent) would make it possible to increase the wages of every employed person in the USSR by the equivalent of two weeks' pay, or about 4 percent of his annual income. Alternatively, an even smaller 10 percent military cut would allow a 50 percent increase in appropriations for housing.[2]

Malenkov, however, was careful to avoid a direct criticism of Stalin's policies.[3] Instead, he adopted an indirect approach based on a judgment that the Soviet economy already had completed one urgently necessary stage in its development, the stage of maximum reinvestment of capital resources in basic production facilities. The next stage, which he presumably intended to direct, should demonstrate the adaptability of the Soviet economic apparatus to a somewhat higher level of consumption. Accordingly, he proposed to carry out a calculated readjustment in the allocation of resources, which would produce relatively quick and conspicuous results in augmenting the volume of goods available for consumption without any noticeable effect upon the predominance of heavy industry in the established pattern of Soviet economic development.

Malenkov singled out four economic areas in which a modest and safe modification of past policies seemed likely to bring about such optimum results toward boosting public morale. The areas selected were the following:[4]

ON THE PROBLEM OF NOMENCLATURE

—And now I will show you our basic product . . .
—Here it is . . .

Krokodil, Moscow, September 30, 1955.

1) *Capital Investments.* By way of a direct attack on the problem, Malenkov announced that investments in consumer goods industries in 1954 would be approximately doubled compared with 1953. It was quite easy to foresee that each absolute addition of new capital in the long-neglected consumer industries would have considerable effect in terms of increasing efficiency and total output.

2) *Surplus Capacity of Defense Industries.* For more immediate results, Malenkov planned to utilize the vast network of modern industrial plants controlled

[2] These percentage figures are calculated from the appropriate allocations in the 1953 annual budget. The military appropriation for 1953 amounted to 110.2 billion rubles. Expenditures on housing totalled 80 billion rubles for 1951–54. *Planovoye Khoziaistvo*, Moscow, No. 2, 1955, p. 40.

[3] In his speech of August 8, Malenkov made it abundantly clear that he had no intention of renouncing the basic line of economic development laid down by his omnipotent predecessor. He spoke glowingly of the "enormous successes" of the Stalin regime, underscored with pride the rate at which heavy industrial production had been built up, and publicly subscribed to the basic principle of Stalin's economic platform, *i.e.*, that if heavy industry did not expand at the rate required by the regime, there could be no progress in light industry, agriculture or in military defense.

[4] The summary analysis of the Malenkov program in the paragraphs which follow is based on the Malenkov speech of August 8, *op. cit.*

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by the armament ministries. Accordingly, assignments were given to a number of defense industries to design and manufacture a prescribed line of consumer goods. These goods were in the metal and household appliance categories: washing machines, bicycles, watches, radios, metal beds and kitchenware.[5]

3) *Government Stockpile.* The most immediately accessible source of consumer goods that could be drawn upon was the sizeable stockpile of foodstuffs and other commodities regularly maintained by the government for emergency purposes. By tapping this ready source, Malenkov was able, as early as April 1953, to step up the flow of goods into retail channels by an amount calculated to result in an 8.5 percent increase over the planned figure for the year. In a parallel move, the government also stepped up its imports of consumer goods from abroad, two-thirds of the increase to come from other Soviet-bloc countries and the rest from the world market.

4) *Fiscal Policies.* In order to provide the added purchasing power necessary to absorb the additional volume of goods placed in circulation, Malenkov effected several substantial adjustments in fiscal policy. First, the government reduced annual deductions from wages for "voluntary" bond purchases by 50 percent, *i.e*, from four to two weeks' pay on the average. This was, without doubt, the most popular single measure of the short-lived Malenkov regime.

Tax Policy and the Peasantry

MALENKOV also set a lower target for revenue to be raised through the heavy "turnover" (sales) tax, the first such reduction in recent years. By collecting a smaller total amount of tax from a larger volume of goods, he effectively reduced the tax bite per unit of article sold in the state stores. As far as the public was concerned, the lower tax made itself felt in the form of a larger reduction in commodity prices during 1953 than during the preceding two years.[6]

The military budget for 1953 was left without change but was trimmed down by some 9 percent in 1954.

The money income of the peasant was also affected favorably by the Malenkov program. To begin with, the program called for cutting in half the tax burden imposed on income derived from the peasant's private plot. Malenkov characterized the onerous tax policy of "recent years" in this regard as "defective" because it reduced a vital incentive for the farmer and thus discouraged needed food production.

The Malenkov budget further benefited the peasants as collective farmers by providing more generous treatment in fixing the arbitrary price levels to be paid for crops turned over to the state under compulsory delivery quotas. The items specifically slated for price increases were: meat, milk, wool, potatoes and vegetables. Outside the required quotas, where the collectives sell to the government on contract, the regime promised higher prices for grain as well as for the above-mentioned commodities.[7]

Taken as a whole, Malenkov's policy adjustments appear to have had as their broadest objective an improvement in public morale which would not only strengthen the regime politically but also introduce a modicum of balance into the economy. A common characteristic of all these measures was that they provided added incentives for better performance, a sphere in which there was certainly ample room for improvement. Tacitly implied in the new course policy was the admission that the revolutionary impetus which had formerly been counted upon to spur unusual individual effort in the economic sphere could no longer be considered an effective stimulus, and that the regime could now expect from management, labor, and the peasantry only a labor input commensurate with the material benefits provided by the government.

Return to the "Heavy" Hand

TO ALL outward appearances, the reforms sponsored by Malenkov during 1953–54 had the support of the entire post-Stalin collective leadership. All the decrees issued during the period were jointly authorized, in accepted Soviet fashion, by the party and the government. Public pronouncements made by Khrushchev, as First Secretary of the Communist Party, lent support in a specific and crucial area to the general Malenkov program, by pressing for an improvement in the system of agricultural incentives.[8]

Toward the end of 1954, however, ominous rumblings of criticism began to be heard in the party press, steadily mounting to a crescendo in late January 1955.[9]

[5] *Pravda*, October 28, 1955.

[6] The estimated saving to the population through lower prices in 1953 was 53 billion rubles as compared to 34.5 billion in 1951 and 28 billion in 1952. C. D. and R. G. Campbell, "Soviet Price Reductions for Consumer Goods, 1948–54," *American Economic Review*, September 1955, p. 614.

[7] For a detailed analysis of Soviet agricultural policies since Stalin's death, see L. Volin, "Report on the Agricultural Front," *Problems of Communism*, No. 6, November–December 1955.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] See, for instance, the leading article in *Partinaia Zhizn* (Party Life), No. 1, 1955; an article by D. Shepilov, editor of *Pravda*, "The Party General Line and Vulgarizers of Marxism," *Pravda*, January 24, 1955; and E. Frolov, "Heavy Industry—the Basis of Soviet Might," *Kommunist*, No. 3, 1955.

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As usual, the criticism was couched in theoretical terms and, although virulent in tone, was directed vicariously at a number of minor economic writers. Their support of increased attention to the consumer—the policy associated with Malenkov—was denounced as a distortion of established party theory.

The climax of the attack was timed to coincide with the annual session of the Supreme Soviet, which opened February 3, 1955. During the week's session, evidently called to formalize an accomplished fact, Malenkov submitted his resignation as Prime Minister (on February 8). The premiership went to Bulganin, who was "nominated" by the triumphant Khrushchev. The latter quite pointedly identified himself as the main force behind the short, oblique campaign which had undermined Malenkov. The new Premier, Bulganin, assailed the policies sponsored by his predecessor as "yielding to the temptation of solving particular temporary problems at the expense of the vital needs of the state."[10]

As the session proceeded, it became abundantly clear that the newly dominant faction considered "consumerism" inconsistent with the permanent objectives of the Communist regime and intended to return to the tested, orthodox policy of giving full priority to expansion of the economic might of the Soviet state. The official press, at the same time that it revived the more militant pre-Malenkov economic slogans, sought to ease public shock by stressing that the long-term welfare of the population would best be served by sacrificing the momentary material needs of the citizen to the objective of building up a powerful industrial structure.[11]

The return to austerity was all too evident in the new leadership's proposed budget for 1955, presented to the Supreme Soviet for its ceremonial approval. Finance Minister Zverev's budget report, unlike his reports of the two preceding years, was conspicuously devoid of references to the generosity of the party and government in striving to fill the daily needs of the Soviet worker and peasant. Small wonder, for the budget prominently called for a 12 percent increase in military appropriations compared with a rise of only 4 percent in total economic expenditures. Appropriations for new housing were cut by 4 percent; allocations for construction of additional manufacturing facilities for consumer goods dropped 16 percent; and funds for expansion of the trading apparatus were pared in half.[12]

[10] *Pravda*, February 10, 1955.

[11] Editorial in *Pravda*, February 8, 1955.

[12] Zverev's budget report, published in *Pravda*, February 4, 1955.

In addition to these measures, the regime dealt a heavy blow to consumer purchasing power by deciding to double the size of the annual state "loan" for 1955, from 15.9 billion rubles in 1954 to 30.5 billion. In terms of take-home pay, this meant an average loss, through automatic deductions for bond purchases, of four weeks' pay instead of the two "donated" by the Soviet wage-earner in 1953 and 1954.

In trying to justify the return to "hard" fiscal policies, the party press contended that real wages had already reached a higher level in 1954 than had been planned for 1955 (37 percent over 1950 instead of 35 percent) while at the same time labor productivity was lagging behind the planned target (33 percent over 1950 instead of 50 percent). This, it was emphasized, ran counter to Marxist theory requiring a faster rate of increase in productivity than in wages. *Pravda*, indirectly critizing the inflationary effect of the Malenkov wage and payment policies, pointed out that the 25 percent rise in consumer purchasing power during 1953–54 had not been accompanied by a comparable increase in the volume of available goods.[13] In line with this analysis, the regime, for the first time since 1949, failed to grant the expected annual reduction in consumer goods prices.

The Spectacular Approach

KHRUSHCHEV'S approach to the problems bequeathed by Stalin also included a return to the device of the large spectacular project. This device had proven effective in the past as a morale-booster by concentrating attention upon some dramatic enterprise vaguely associated in the public mind with progress and the general welfare.[14] The scheme produced by Khrushchev addressed itself to agriculture, where some of the gravest unsolved problems lay. It consisted of a grandiose project to add many millions of acres of new plowland to the available farm acreage in the country.[15]

The agricultural situation admittedly has given the post-Stalin leadership its worst headache. On the

[13] *Pravda*, March 27, 1955.

[14] Khrushchev's resort to this device was in line with the tactic inaugurated in 1920 by Lenin, who instructed one of his associates to prepare some sort of striking economic scheme, some "shining broad prospect" to work for, something that "would be understood by the proletariat." See letter written by Lenin to Krzhizhanovsky, quoted in Sidney & Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization*, Longmans Green, London, 1935, p. 615.

[15] The project originally called for placing a minimum of 32 million acres of new land into grain cultivation by 1955. The target was increased to 37 million acres in August 1954, and has since been practically doubled for 1956 to about 69–74 million acres. See L. Volin, *op.cit.*

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one hand, overall population growth has been at the brisk rate of about 1.5 percent a year; that of its urban component still faster. On the other hand, the country's collective and state farms have shown little capacity for a rapid increase in output, as demonstrated, for example, by the lack of any significant rise in the annual compulsory deliveries of grain to the government over recent years. The spread between the two factors of population and production has been widening instead of narrowing, as shown by the data in Table I.

Table I

	1938	1953	1953 as % of 1938
Urban population (millions)....	55.9 [1]	80.2 [2]	143.1
Grain deliveries to the state (million metric tons).....	38.0 [3]	40.4 [4]	106.3
Amount available per urban inhabitant (kilograms).....	680	500	73.5

[1] *Official Soviet Census, January 17, 1939.*
[2] *Malenkov speech, Aug. 8, 1955,* Pravda, *Aug. 9, 1955.*
[3] Kalendar-Spravochnik 1948 (*Moscow*), *p. 131.*
[4] *Khrushchev's report, Sept. 1953 Plenum, Pravda, September 15, 1953.*

The production picture for meat and milk was no better. Before the beginning of enforced collectivization (1928), there was one cow for every five inhabitants in the Soviet Union; by 1953, the ratio had dropped to one for nine. As part of the same picture, the number of peasant families too poor to own a cow increased from some 20 percent before the war to 45 percent in 1953.[16]

In another troublesome sector of the Soviet economy, namely the construction sector, Khrushchev proposed a similarly drastic solution calculated to produce tangible results in a minimum time. He announced a plan to build a network of factories for the manufacture of large prefabricated blocks of reinforced concrete. These blocks, made in standard sizes with a vertical dimension large enough for one full story of a building, would be delivered to construction sites, where they could be erected quickly into complete structures. In addition, the building processes presumably for both industrial and residential construction, would be speeded up by the use of more modern machinery.

The state of Soviet industrial technology also has been receiving increased attention under the new collective leadership. Since July 1955, a comprehensive official study of the technological situation has been underway, and its results have evidently not been too flattering to the country's designers and producers of equipment. Relatively candid reports presented at a Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU last July cited evidences of widespread backwardness in several fairly important branches of machine-building, and similar disclosures have subsequently appeared in the Soviet press.[17]

Although admissions of backwardness have applied chiefly to industries engaged in civilian production, it is significant that the regime has adjudged even domestically produced machine tools to be less modern, less versatile and less productive than comparable Western products. In addition domestic machine producers have been charged with an excessive waste of metal and with turning out a final product often 50 percent heavier than foreign machines performing the same jobs. The implication is that the Soviet machine industry still has need of frequent infusions of new technology from abroad, without which it tends to fall behind not only in production efficiency but also in the development of improved models.

Khrushchev's recognition that Soviet industry and agriculture alike can benefit greatly from closer familiarity with foreign techniques became apparent in the months immediately after his assumption of primary responsibility for Soviet policy. After mid-1955, hand-picked teams of specialists in various fields—especially in agriculture, construction and machine industry, where the new leadership was particularly anxious to effect corrective measures—were dispatched in increasing numbers to the United States and some Western European countries to study developments in their particular fields.

Austerity for the Time Being

As far as current economic performance is concerned, Khrushchev's measures to halt the trend toward "consumerism" under Malenkov appear to be having the desired effect. An assessment of their effectiveness must rely, of course, on official Soviet data and consequently must allow for possible "tailoring" of the facts to fit a predetermined "progress report." The first such data on Soviet economic results for 1955 were announced by Deputy Premier Lazar Kaganovitch in his address on the November 7 anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. These data indicated that both the consumer's purchasing power and the volume of goods available for him to buy were effectively held in check during the year.

[16] *Pravda,* September 15, 1953.

[17] Bulganin's report to July Plenum, *Pravda,* July 17, 1955.

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Real wages registered a gain, but it was the smallest in recent years—1.5 percent as compared with an average yearly rise of 8 percent recorded during 1951–54. Similarly, although the total output of consumer goods also increased under the long-term plan for the expansion of all industry, the increase amounted to only 8 percent in 1955 as against an average annual expansion of 13 percent during the preceding four-year period. On the other hand, the heavy industries had their best year of the recent period, registering a production rise of 14 percent compared with an annual average of 13 percent during the four earlier years.[18]

To sum up, the events of the past three years have produced no substantive change in the basic official approach to economic development in the USSR. Neither the Malenkov nor the Khrushchev faction has shown any inclination to abandon the traditional Communist method of amassing and distributing economic wealth. The practice of accumulating forced savings at a maximum rate by means of a heavy turnover tax has remained unchanged, as has the pattern for allocating these savings to the various sectors of the economy. The nation's long-neglected requirements for new social capital continue to be treated as a residual claimant on available funds. A preponderant share of the national income is still being poured into industrial capital and heavy armaments instead of being devoted to filling the needs of the population for a better supply of food, daily necessities and housing.

But while there has been agreement with respect to the general orientation of the Soviet economy, the problem of how to deal with the neglected economic areas has found the post-Stalin leadership vacillating between two alternatives. The alternative chosen by Malenkov was based on the assumption that the more irritating aspects of daily life in the USSR could be mitigated to a considerable extent by a slight retardation of the headlong rush for sheer industrial power. His approach to this task involved, in the first instance, an improvement of the immediate rewards offered to the Soviet citizen for his economic contribution. Ultimately, it may be surmised, Malenkov's reform measures were calculated to make progress in all elements of the Soviet economy more stable, if somewhat less spectacular in the officially favored sector.

The pursuit of this alternative, however, required a relaxation of the pressures against a rise in living standards, which the ultimately dominant element

[18] Kaganovitch speech, *Pravda*, November 7, 1955.

Do you want me to wrap up this coat, or will you return it right away?

Krokodil, Moscow, February 10, 1955.

in the leadership could not reconcile with current Soviet ambitions at home and abroad. The alternative approach which has prevailed under Khrushchev's leadership involves the continued orientation of the Soviet economy along the line of strengthening of its productive capabilities, coupled with a call for further sacrifices on the part of the population. By the same token, a warning has been served on the Soviet people that they will continue to be denied their right to a level of daily life commensurate with their labor effort until such time as the regime has achieved the kind of economic structure it considers necessary under its own concept of power.

[*Author's Addendum:* In late December 1955, the Khrushchev regime unveiled the public version of its financial plan for the year ahead. In its essential features, the budget for 1956 reflects a power-oriented economic program. The heavy industrial sector of the economy received a larger proportion of capital investments than in the two preceding years, 60 percent of the total, as compared with 53.3 percent in 1954. By comparison, the light industries were assigned only 4.8 percent of total investments, as

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against 8.3 percent in 1954. At the same time, the tax on turnover (retail sales) was raised sharply, from 40 percent of total state in 1955 revenue to 45 percent in 1946. The target of the forced loan remains at the high level of 1955.

Viewed in the context of the budget as a whole, the somewhat lower 1956 appropriation for "defense" (about 5 billion rubles, comparable prices) does not reflect any decline in the war preparedness of the regime. It is more directly related to: (1) the reported reduction of 640,000 in the size of the armed forces during 1955, prompted by changing technological conditions of warfare; (2) the reduction in the prices of producer goods, including armaments, carried out in 1955. The latter is part of a continuing process of adjustment between prices in the consumer and producer sectors of the economy whereby the regime can shift resources from one sector to the other.]

The Soviet Writer's Search For New Values

By JERI LABER

"ENOUGH of the new 'Soviet man'! Let's think about the human being!" This appeal is the implicit theme of three of the most controversial Soviet literary works of the post-Stalin era: Ilya Ehrenburg's *The Thaw*, Vera Panova's *The Seasons*, and Leonid Zorin's *Guests*.[1]

The Ehrenburg and Panova novels and the Zorin play, all of which appeared in 1954, have added new fuel to a discussion which has been burning hot and cold on the Soviet literary front since shortly after Stalin's death. Sparked in 1953 by a few lone voices who spoke out in brave if carefully worded appeals for greater cultural latitude, the discussion rapidly gained momentum and since has devolved, in large measure, into a controversy between two forces—the party bureaucrats who control the Soviet Writers' Union and who seem bent on perpetuating their hold over the arts, and the champions of a more liberal line in literature which would widen the scope of "orthodox" content and expression.[2]

Ehrenburg's position in this struggle has been a matter of some dispute; since in the Stalinist era he was a frequent mouthpiece for the regime in matters of literature, there were some observers who felt his plea for more "truthfulness" and "sincerity" in literary creation, put forth in an article "On the Work of a Writer" early in the course of the post-Stalin discussion, was an officially inspired move to bring the debate under control by establishing the outside limits of permissible argumentation.[3] Ehrenburg's later authorship of *The Thaw*, however, seems to place him on the side of those seeking to infuse a new and freer spirit into Soviet literature.

Apparently encouraged by the atmosphere of relative relaxation which made a "discussion" even possible, Ehrenburg, Panova and Zorin saw an opportunity to protest against the harsh restrictions of Stalin's time and to express their aspirations for the future. In this respect, their three works are of considerable value to the student of Soviet affairs, for they provide new insight into Soviet life and into the real thoughts of distinguished Soviet writers who

[1] Ilya Ehrenburg, *The Thaw*, translated from the Russian by Manya Harari, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1955; Vera Panova, *The Seasons*, published under the title *A Year's Span* in the English-language magazine *Soviet Literature*, Moscow, No. 5, 1954, pp. 9–162; Leonid Zorin, *Gosti* (Guests), published in *Teatr* (Theater), No. 2, 1954, pp. 3–45.

[2] For detailed analyses of developments in the literary "debate", see Vera Alexandrova, "On the Literary 'Front'," *Problems of Communism*, No. 4, Vol. 3 (July–August 1954), p. 11, and Gleb Struve, "The Second Congress of Soviet Writers," *Ibid.*, No. 2, Vol. 4 (March–April 1955), p. 3.

[3] See Alexandrova, *op.cit.* Ehrenburg's article appeared in *Znamya* [The Banner], Moscow, October 1953.

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were once champions of the "Zhdanov line" in literature.[4]

One of the most striking features of Ehrenburg's novel, and one which distinguishes it from the works of Panova and Zorin, is his harsh condemnation of the political terror and repression which existed under Stalin's rule. Ehrenburg startles the reader by referring to the purge trials, to sudden arrests and to other manifestations of the police state never mentioned in a Soviet novel during Stalin's lifetime. He frankly discusses the atmosphere of fear, suspicion and distrust which has pervaded all of Soviet society, and he very convincingly shows its effects on the lives of his characters.

Lives Under a Shadow

DMITRI KOROTEYEV, one of the heroes of *The Thaw*, faced his "first great trial" when his stepfather was arrested during the 1936 purge trials. Dmitri's youth was deeply scarred by this experience; he was ostracized by his friends and expelled from the Young Communist League. By dint of hard work and perseverance, Dmitri became a successful and respected engineer, but the memories of his youth remained with him. Later in life he hears about a youngster unjustly expelled from the Komsomol and is asked: "Can you imagine what it means to go through this at seventeen?" Dmitri makes no reply and "seems to be remembering something," and in his silence we sense a repressed bitterness, a bitterness which explains his fervent hope that the new government will bring change. "Things are changing," we are told. "They mean for people to live properly now."

Through Vera, a Jewish doctor in *The Thaw*, Ehrenburg documents the anti-Semitic nature of the "Moscow doctors' plot." Ehrenburg makes it quite clear that as a doctor and a Jew, Vera knew her own fate was in jeopardy. Attitudes toward Vera in the town differed greatly, ranging from overt hostility to silent sympathy. No one dared to protest openly against Vera's "guilt by association," and it was only when the charges were repudiated that Vera could live her life normally again.

Ehrenburg portrays another talented engineer, Sokolovsky, as blunt and asocial, a man who makes enemies easily and whose essential honesty and dignity is seldom recognized. Isolated and lonely, Sokolovsky had been abandoned by a "bourgeois" wife who defected to the West after seeing her first glimpse of "real life . . . in an American film shown at a VOKS party."[5] Time and again during the many years that followed, Sokolovsky's enemies dug up this incident from his past and used it to destroy his influence and authority. This was quite easy to do. First, word was spread that Sokolovsky's "record is a bit off-color. His family is abroad. In Belgium." The story grew, and soon it was generally known that Sokolovsky was "a deliberate saboteur who had settled his family in Belgium." A feature article appeared in the local newspaper under the heading, "Falcon [a play on Sokolovsky's name] Proves To Be a Belgian Sparrow." Finally Sokolovsky was forced to leave the town where he lived and go elsewhere, where the cycle began again.

Sokolovsky is pleased by the changes which follow Stalin's death and has great hopes for the future under the new regime. It is he who predicts from reading the October 1953 consumer goods decree that a heartless bureaucrat in the town where he has moved "will soon be sacked." "One follows from the other," he explains. He is no longer worried when new enemies begin to bring up his past in an attempt to discredit him. "No, not now," he declares. "They wouldn't get away with it."

Interestingly enough, it was not Ehrenburg's denunciation of the political excesses of Stalinism which evoked the wrath of his critics. It seems that criticism of certain of the evils of Stalin's time, combined with praise for the benevolence of the new regime, is part of the "new look" in Soviet literature. This was vividly illustrated by Alexander Korneychuk's play *Wings*, which received Khrushchev's personal applause for showing the tribulations of a woman falsely accused of collaborating with the Nazis by members of the "Beria-Abakumov clique."[6]

[4] In 1946 Stalin's right-hand man, Andrei Zhdanov, laid down the postwar party line for Soviet literature in a published criticism specifically leveled at two Soviet magazines. Aimed at reversing a trend toward freer cultural expression during World War II, it proclaimed the establishment of rigid party control over literature and demanded that Soviet writers adhere strictly to the ideological dictates of the regime.

[5] VOKS designates the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations Abroad, the official organization charged with handling cultural exchange and cultural relations with the outside world.

[6] Korneychuk's play deals, among other things, with the arbitrary role of the political police in Soviet society, the unsatisfied material needs of Soviet people, bureaucracy, and the tendency of party hacks to gloss over present difficulties by referring to the promised Utopia of the future. The author has carefully analyzed the changing Soviet atmosphere and has presented recent developments in a way which is completely acceptable to party leaders. Korneychuk differs from the writers discussed in this article in the fact that he is concerned mainly with recording officially sanctioned changes; he does not probe the Soviet social system nor does he express his own hopes for the future.

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The new Soviet leaders are intent upon showing that unwarranted arrest, fear and distrust are part of the past. And thus this aspect of Ehrenburg's novel fully accords with current Soviet policy.

It is Ehrenburg's characters themselves and his attitude toward many of the basic features of contemporary Soviet life which offended his critics. The same sin of frank appraisal opened Panova and Zorin to attack. This aspect of their work is worthy of attention, for it sheds light on the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the new regime.

A Probing Look at Soviet Society

PANOVA'S *The Seasons* and Zorin's *Guests*, together with *The Thaw*, were criticized vigorously at the Second Soviet Writers' Congress at the end of 1954.[7] It is no accident that these three works were the object of extensive controversy. For despite differences in treatment and in emphasis, there are many themes basic to the three: the evils of bureaucracy, the contrast between the old Bolsheviks and the new generation, the development of bourgeois values in Soviet society and the gap between personal happiness and social productivity.

The "villain" in each work is a bureaucrat, a man who abuses a position of authority by setting his own interests above those of the collective. Ivan Zhuravliov, Ehrenburg's villain, is a careerist factory director, intent upon maintaining and improving his own position by whatever means he can. He centers all of his attention upon increasing his factory's production, allowing his workers to live in hovels and explaining that "I've seen worse in Moscow." He makes "rosy reports" to the Ministry, convinced that this is what they want, and tells his wife, "You have to know how to say nothing." Everyone in the town is convinced that "Zhuravliov is on the way up"; a cynical young artist paints his picture, declaring "I only back winners." Zhuravliov's removal from his post at the end of the novel coincides with the advent of spring, of the thaw which presumably signifies the end of Stalinism.

Bortashevich, Panova's bureaucrat, is also the director of a large factory and a highly respected public figure as well. Driven by the greed of an ambitious wife, he embezzles from the state and lives for many years in the lap of unearned luxury, with a large gang of petty crooks and criminals operating under his protection. When the authorities finally uncover his crimes, he kills himself, unable to face the disgrace.

Ehrenburg's bureaucrat is driven by a desire for power, position and prestige, Panova's by a desire for wealth. Kirpichev, the bureaucrat of Zorin's play, wants both. Zorin makes this quite clear through the words of Kirpichev's sister, who bluntly lists the qualities of her brother's character as "banality, greed, desire for fame . . . and there's one more desire—power."

[7] See Struve, *op.cit.*

Portrait of a Soviet Painter

Dramatis Persona: **Vladimir Andreievitch Pukhov (Volodya), a young Soviet painter, son of Andrei Ivanovich Pukhov, schoolteacher**

After finishing at the Art School, Volodya painted a big picture called "The Feast at the *Kolkhoz*." It was greatly praised. He was given a studio in Moscow; he sent some money to his mother and wrote that he intended to get married. The girl threw him over for a film producer. Volodya was offended. He was equally offended when the jury rejected his picture, "A Meeting in a Workshop." His nerves got the better of him. Unexpectedly even to himself, he lost his temper at an artists' meeting and trounced the venerable masters, laureates twice and thrice over. It was then that it was found he had been given the studio by mistake and it was required for an artist who had recently been made a laureate. At the same time his commission to paint the portrait of the distinguished steel worker was inexplicably cancelled. Volodya realized that he had said the wrong things. He set about retrieving his position; he lavished praise upon the artists he had insulted, he ran down his own work, calling himself a boor and a bad comrade, and finally announced curtly that he was leaving for the provinces to gain experience of daily life at an industrial plant.

Thus, after his long absence, he was again at home. But his outlook on life had changed. Andrei Ivanovich (the father) confided to his wife: "It's the way he thinks that I don't like. Yesterday I heard him arguing with Sonya about some book or other. Sonya said there weren't any ideas in it; Volodya told her a writer wasn't paid to have ideas. 'All that happens to you with ideas is that you break your neck. What you're meant to look for in a book is ideology. If it's there what more do you want? It's lunatics that have ideas.' "

—*From Ehrenburg's* The Thaw, *pp. 36–38.*

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The bureaucrat is certainly not an unknown phenomenon in Soviet literature; indeed, he has become one of the stock "negative characters" upon which Soviet writers frequently draw. But the three writers discussed here do not show the bureaucrat as an isolated phenomenon on the Soviet scene. They suggest that these men are representative of an influential class in Soviet society; more important, they see them not as "bourgeois remnants" but as products of the Soviet social system itself.

It is the institutions, values, and ways of life developed after 37 years of Soviet rule that Ehrenburg, Panova, and Zorin are probing. This is the distinguishing feature of their works, and it is this which their critics could not accept. For theirs is not the idealized Soviet society found in so much of Soviet literature, a society of happy working people united in the common cause of building communism and scornful of a few "negative characters" who represent "vestiges of the past." Theirs is a realistic society with real problems, a society with lost and unhappy people, with class distinctions and snobbery, with cynicism and careerism, crime and juvenile delinquency. Theirs is a society where people, despite the Communist credo, still ask themselves the question: What meaning can I find for my life?

The Gulf Between Generations

THE authors make it quite clear that the problems they discuss are new problems which have arisen under Soviet rule. Their interest centers upon the new Soviet generation, born and raised under Communism, which has developed its own values, beliefs and attitudes toward life. In each work we see a great contrast between the Soviet young people of today and their parents, the "makers of the revolution."

Old Pukhov in *The Thaw* is a former Bolshevik who fought in the revolution and the civil war. Now a kindly old schoolteacher of idealistic leanings, he is "able to re-educate criminals but can do nothing with his own son." Volodya, the son, is a cynical hack artist who will paint anything and say anything to further his own career. "Everyone's shouting about art and nobody cares a fig for it really; that's the sign of our times," he declares. "What you're supposed to look for in a book is ideology. It's lunatics that have ideas." And, generalizing from his own unjustified success, he states: "Raphael wouldn't be admitted to the Soviet Artists' Union."

Sonya, Pukhov's daughter, is equally unlike her father. She is a bright, serious young engineer, with a fine career ahead of her. Practical and sober, this "new Soviet woman" is afraid of her own emotions and unable to love. Her father, although proud of his daughter, fears her, while she despises his sentimentality.

Pukhov is treated lovingly by Ehrenburg, but he is shown to be somewhat ineffectual, a dreamer who "talks the language of the past." It is Volodya and Sonya with whom Ehrenburg is concerned; here is the new Soviet youth—one corrupted by the system, the other leading a productive social life at the expense of personal happiness.

Like Ehrenburg, Panova is concerned with the contrast between generations. Dorofeya, one of her heroines, is a product of the revolution and a prototype of the successful Soviet woman. An illiterate peasant girl at the time of the revolution, she runs off with a Red soldier during the civil war and places all her hopes on the new society which is being created. Through long and difficult years, she educates herself, then becomes a trusted worker, a party member, and finally a leading public figure in her town.

Perhaps to make up for the hardships of her own life, Dorofeya spoils and pampers Gennadi, her only son. An indigent, cynical young man, he dreams of owning cars and motorcycles, drinks, wears suits with "square shoulders," and wanders from job to job, an easy prey for local criminals:

> **He wanted to earn good money and be looked up to. But he wanted this to come without any effort, of itself, while he pursued only his own enjoyment. Since, however, things did not work out that way, and never could, Gennadi had a grudge against life. He felt that life had cheated him.**

Like old Pukhov, Dorofeya could do nothing with her son. Her values, the values of the revolution, were meaningless to him. It is only when Gennadi is nearly killed by one of his criminal associates that he repents and we are led to believe that he will mend his ways.

The Kirpichev family in Zorin's play embraces three generations: Bolshevik, bureaucrat and playboy. Seventy-year-old Alexei Kirpichev is a distinguished Communist, a former comrade of Dzerzhinsky and a hero of the First Five-Year Plan. His son Peter is a "bureaucratic lord" who declares: "The state mechanism is an orchestra. If you want to play in it you must follow the baton, follow the rhythm." Peter's son Tema (Alexei's grandson) is a young student-playboy. An habitué of Cocktail Hall, he is "known to all the *maître d'hôtels*," gives parties at the family *dacha* and gads about in a chauffeur-driven car.

"Is this what we fought for?" old Alexei asks, looking at his high-and-mighty son and his wastrel grandson. To a statement that "the aims of today

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are those of 1917," Peter replies: "Who's speaking of aims? . . . It's the country that's different. We are different."

"The country is different. We are different." This is what Ehrenburg, Panova and Zorin demand be recognized. Soviet youth does not share the values of its parents. New ideals must be found for a new society, for the young people who need them desperately.

The New "Elite"

IN *The Seasons* Panova boldly contrasts the general lack of ideals in contemporary Soviet society with the growth of bourgeois values and class consciousness among a certain sector of the population. That the bureaucrat Bortashevich was stealing money from the state went long unsuspected. His family lived for many years in great luxury, but this fact alone was not enough to make people suspicious of Bortashevich. Apparently it is not unusual for a factory director's family to live in an apartment which "breathed an atmosphere of dignified luxury," with overstuffed furniture, luxurious carpeting and a servant referred to in parlor conversation as "our Margo." There was nothing overtly wrong with the fact that Bortashevich's son had his own Neva radio or that his daughter, "brilliantly lovely in an evening frock, her eyelids drooping superciliously," set off gaily for the opera, hoping to meet her young man there and to "invite him out to the *dacha*." Panova seems to feel that her audience will get vicarious pleasure from reading about the Bortashevich family's glamorous life, and until the very end of the novel she spares them from the knowledge that Bortashevich is a thief and a criminal.

Bortashevich's daughter, Katya, is portrayed sympathetically throughout the novel as a "poor little rich girl." She spends a summer on a collective farm, then goes back to the family *dacha*, pleased with "the feeling that she was not a fifth wheel on the coach of national effort, that she could manage any work and show her hands to anyone—rough, sunburned, unmanicured." Later in the novel she meets one of her acquaintances from that summer and is pleased because "a plain working man saw her and recognized her."

Zorin also makes no attempt to conceal the existence of a working class and an elite in the Soviet Union. In criticizing his bureaucrat son, Alexei Kirpichev makes clear that he is criticizing an existing class, and a very powerful class at that:

". . . Alongside the toilers and hard workers there have arisen imperceptibly, but abundantly, such people as you, bureaucratic lords, gluttonous and conceited, far removed from the people."

Like Panova and Zorin, Ehrenburg refuses to idealize Soviet life. His emphasis is on the inner thoughts of Soviet people, and his aim is to show that personal problems, doubts and anxieties exist, even for the "new Soviet man." Ehrenburg puts his sentiment into the mouth of Savchenko, a young engineer in *The Thaw:*

"This novel touches on a raw spot—so often people do one thing in their private lives and say something quite different. The public is longing for such books."

Ehrenburg's major characters hold responsible positions and are successful in their work. But unlike the "positive hero" usually encountered in Soviet literature, they are frustrated and unhappy people, striving for love and security in a cold and impersonal world. "It's frightening that you can never read another person's mind," one of his young heroines thinks. "You walk in darkness, you think happiness is in front of you, yet one more step and there's a precipice. What a terrifying game!"

The Counterattack

THE boldness and candor with which Ehrenburg, Panova and Zorin portrayed Soviet society met with severe criticism from many Soviet critics. Ehrenburg was accused of showing "only the darker aspects of Soviet life," [8] of "distorting Soviet reality," [9] and of implying there is "much that is bad in Soviet life and little that is good." [10] Some of his critics condemned the characters in *The Thaw* as "spiritually dislocated neurotics, tormented and suffering people," [11] "careerists and flatterers." [12] Another critic, while conceding that positive characters in the novel were indeed "good," criticized Ehrenburg for intimating that these people were the exceptions and that "people in general" in Soviet society are "bad." [13] Ehrenburg was also found guilty of invidiously comparing the present Soviet generation with the old Bolsheviks, thereby suggesting that romanticism is lacking in contemporary Soviet life.[14]

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[8] "The Strength of Our Literature Lies in Affirming Life," *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, June 6, 1954, p. 2.

[9] Speech by S. Mikhalkov at Second Soviet Writers' Congress, *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (Literary Journal), December 22, 1954, p. 4.

[10] Konstantin Simonov, *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, July 17 and 20, pp. 2–3.

[11] "The Strength of Our Literature . . . ," *op.cit.*

[12] Mikhalkov, *op.cit.*

[13] Simonov, *op.cit.*

[14] "The Strength of Our Literature . . . ," *op.cit.*

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Konstantin Simonov, Ehrenburg's major antagonist, centered most of his fire on Ehrenburg's attitude toward Soviet art. He accused Ehrenburg of "caricaturing our artistic life" by equating it with the views of the cynical artist Volodya Pukhov. Simonov chastised Ehrenburg for not refuting Volodya's views about the sterility and cynicism of Soviet art and for offering as an alternative to Volodya only the "pure artist" Saburov, whose ideas are closely akin to the error of "formalism." For Simonov, Ehrenburg's greatest sin was the portrayal of Volodya Pukhov not as an enemy of Soviet art but as its victim, as a weakling unable to withstand the unhealthy pressures of the Soviet artistic world.[15]

It is interesting that the early reviews of Panova's novel praised her for accurately portraying Soviet life. Marietta Shaginyan, writing in *Izvestia*, compared Panova's style to that of Dickens and praised her for showing "how the life of the common, ordinary man . . . his entire psyche . . . is conditioned by the Soviet social system." [16] And another Soviet critic was pleased by the fact that Panova did not "embellish Soviet reality" but showed "the life of Soviet people as it really is." [17]

An article in *Pravda*, however, soon set off a stream of invective against Panova's work.[18] Panova's "refusal to pass judgement on her characters" resulted in the charge of "objectivism." [19] She was compared to writers of the early NEP period and was criticized for a "petty-bourgeois outlook," [20] for showing "bourgeois happiness and bourgeois sorrows" and neglecting to portray the effects of the Soviet social system on her characters.[21]

Criticism of Zorin was no less severe. He was accused of "deeply distorting the very nature of the Soviet social system" by portraying "top dogs" and "underdogs" in Soviet society and by implying that Soviet bureaucrats "spring from the soil of our social system and of the material prosperity which is continually growing in our country." [22]

[15] Simonov, *op.cit.*

[16] Marietta Shaginyan, "*The Seasons*'; notes on the New Novel by V. Panova," *Izvestia*, March 28, 1954, p. 3.

[17] A. Dementyev, "New Novel by Vera Panova," *Soviet Literature*, No. 3, 1954, pp. 136–138.

[18] V. Kochetov, "Which Seasons?", *Pravda*, May 27, 1954, p. 2.

[19] Summary of report by V. Druzin at a party meeting of Leningrad writers. "For High Idea Content and Skill," *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, June 5, 1954, p. 1.

[20] Druzin, *op.cit.*

[21] Kochetov, *op.cit.*

[22] "On L. Zorin's Play, *Guests*," *Sovetskaia Kultura* (Soviet Culture), June 5, 1954, p. 3.

—They tore my novel to pieces. I haven't the slightest idea what I should write in my defense . . .
—A good novel.

Krokodil, Moscow, February 10, 1955.

The Prospects for Freer Expression

YET despite harsh criticism, Panova and Ehrenburg have also found support and have managed to retain their prominence on the Soviet literary scene. At the Second Soviet Writers' Congress, Marietta Shaginyan defied the group of writers who had denounced Panova and held to her previous position that Panova had "made a step forward" in her novel and had "worked on the material in a particularly creative way." [23]

Significantly, too, Ehrenburg was allowed to publish a defense of *The Thaw* in *Literaturnaia Gazeta* in response to Simonov's criticism.[24] Instead of facing up to the charges levelled against him, however, Ehrenburg engaged in some semantic acrobatics, trying to prove that his novel merely "described about a dozen people and covered a short period of time"; that it "is not devoted to art, but to human relationships, to the struggle against a heartless attitude towards one's comrades . . . to the sincere thawing of the reserved natures of people who are lonely in their personal lives"; that Simonov's criticism grossly misrepresented his (Ehrenburg's)

[23] Speech by Marietta Shaginyan at Second Soviet Writers' Congress, *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, December 25, 1954, pp. 5–6.

[24] Simonov, *op.cit.*; Ilya Ehrenburg, "On An Article by K. Simonov," *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, August 3, 1954, p. 3.

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attitude towards Soviet society. The article was, in short, a sorry though perhaps understandable substitute for a "defense" of his work. But the fact remains that Ehrenburg was not forced to recant and confess his sins. Apparently the authorities decided to publicize the *Thaw* controversy as an example of the new "freedom of discussion" in Soviet literature; the editors of *Literaturnaia Gazeta* drove this point home by inviting readers to participate in a general discussion of *The Thaw*, in order to "prove that the novel has not been banned by anyone, any more than readers or writers have been prohibited from uttering their opinions about it." [25]

Within the ranks of the Writers' Union an important battle seems to be raging between writers who demand greater freedom for Soviet literature and those who stubbornly cling to the precepts of Zhdanovism. The leaders of the Writers' Union have come out against Ehrenburg's stand, but they seem willing to tolerate the Ehrenburg group as a "loyal opposition." And this in itself is a small ray of hope on the Soviet literary horizon.

At the First Soviet Writers' Congress in 1934, Karl Radek and several other speakers had found it necessary to justify the growing dominance of *partiinost* (party-minededness) and tendentiousness in Soviet literature. Rather than viewing these qualities as ends in themselves, Radek saw them as necessary evils during a transitionary period of change and upheaval:

The revolution, which is an army of labor . . . cannot devote much time to personality at all stages of its march, but after its victory the revolution is a soil upon which personality can bloom in all its richness . . . Communist society will be a million times richer in great personalities than any other type of society could be.[26]

Ehrenburg obviously does not believe that the ideal society has been born. But he recognizes that a new society has been created with its own norms and institutions, and he feels that this society should be truthfully portrayed. In his view, strict control over the content and style of literature was justifiable in a period of revolutionary change, but that period is over and literature must be freed from its bonds. Ehrenburg is undoubtedly speaking for many of his colleagues when he declares in *The Thaw:*

We have taken a lot of trouble over one half of the human being, but the other half is neglected. The result is that one-half of the house is a slum.

If by the "other half of the human being" Ehrenburg refers to the personal dreams, problems, doubts and aspirations of Soviet man, to his "non-socialist" personality, the importance of his appeal cannot be overestimated.

[25] "Review of Readers' Letters on I. Ehrenburg's Novel," *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, Oct. 5, 1954, pp. 3–4.

[26] Karl Radek, *Reports and Speeches at First Soviet Writers' Congress*, International Publishers, New York, p. 177.

The "Thaw" and After

By WALTER Z. LAQUEUR

IT IS now one year since the last Congress of Soviet Writers, and not a few people are wondering what has become of the "thaw" in Soviet literature (as Mr. Ilya Ehrenburg put it). Has the post-Stalinist "ferment of ideas" continued, or has it slowly petered out?

Unfortunately, this very way of putting the question is misleading. The Second Soviet Writers Congress held in December 1954, made it quite clear that there would be no quick and major changes [1]; and in-

A free-lance journalist now residing in London, Mr. Laqueur has written widely on Soviet and Communist affairs. His article is reprinted in abridged form from *Encounter*, Vol. V, No. 4, October 1955, published monthly by Panton House, 25 Haymarket, London, S. W. 1, for the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

[1] See Gleb Struve, "The Second Congress of Soviet Writers," *Problems of Communism*, No. 2, Vol. IV (March–April 1955), p. 3.

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deed there have been no great surprises in the literary field since then. Scientists, men of letters, *etc.* did not argue the issues that really preoccupied them; what did happen, and what was novel enough, was that a few daring spirits among them publicly hinted that they would be ready to discuss some of the "safer" of these issues. There was no great, stirring controversy, but instead a very cautious attempt to get some discussion under way. The Second Writers Congress brought clashes between certain personalities (such as authors Mikhail Sholokhov and Konstantin Simonov) who may have represented literary cliques or literary trends; but there was no open conflict of ideas.

And yet, it would be equally wrong to say that Soviet literary development over the past months has represented "no change" or a retreat "back to 1952." If present-day Soviet writing can be compared at all to any previous era, it is the 1938–40 period which comes first to mind. But even that comparison would be superficial in some important respects. For there are new and significant features in the mainstream of Soviet literature in 1955.

There has been one, and only one, discussion on basic cultural issues in the Communist world during the past year. It has taken place not in the USSR but in China. However, it has been given wide publicity in the Soviet Union and its European satellites, and clearly has more than local significance. That is the Hu Feng affair.

Until he came under attack, Hu Feng enjoyed considerable prestige as a Chinese literary critic and as spokesman for a group of younger writers and critics who shared his cultural views. Although all of the group were fervent Communists or pro-Communists, they apparently became distressed over a period of time by developments on the Chinese literary scene. They formulated a program in the summer of 1954 pleading for greater intellectual and cultural freedom for Chinese writers and for a relaxation of party control over publishing. This astonishingly naive plea fell, not so astonishingly, on deaf ears: Hu Feng's "deviation" was officially condemned by the head members of the Chinese Writers and Artists Union in February 1955. A press campaign launched against the group picked up momentum until by May the original charge of "ideological deviationism" was supplanted by violent charges of "gangsterism," "sabotage," "counterrevolution" and "infamous imperialist spying."

The Hu Feng affair was followed with great interest in the Soviet and satellite press. Typical of satellite comment is the following excerpt from a programmatic article by Jerzy Putrament, a "keynoter" among official Polish theoreticians:

It is interesting to observe that some of Hu Feng's reactionary theories have been in currency in a somewhat different form in our country too. . . . Here and there, under the conditions of increasing pressure by hostile propaganda, the protagonists of bourgeois views exploit every possibility of revenge.

The implication of the case for Soviet Europe is, therefore, that however much the party may relax its reins over culture, there are fixed limits that may not be trespassed. The warning is almost certainly superfluous. But that it should be uttered at all is an indication that not everyone is happy over some recent trends in Soviet culture. Let us now examine some of these trends.

Hearts, Flowers and Production Records

ONE of the more interesting is the Soviet literati's "rediscovery" of love and sex. It is a development that invites easy irony, but its significance should not be underestimated. For more than fifteen years Soviet novels, poems, and plays had been centered on the problems of industrial and agricultural production: they described the Soviet citizen as he was—or rather should have been—at his work. People were in love, married, and begot children somehow, but these were mere trifles—a premium for hard work in many cases. A Rumanian magazine characterized the positive hero of the postwar period of "socialist realism" thus:

He has penetrating eyes, flashing with lightning, he is husky, robust, with Herculean chest and muscles, he radiates strength and optimism. He doesn't drink and he may even give up smoking. He repels the allurements of the beautiful sex, is chaste up to the day of his marriage. He will marry a chaste woman, and all their children also will be chaste (*Viata Romineasca* [Rumanian Life], March 1954).

Soviet readers are used to putting up with a great deal, but the suppression of sex in literature was really too much for them. During the "thaw" of 1953–4, readers and writers alike reacted fairly sharply against that particular aspect of socialist realism, and the opposition has continued to this day. Addressing movie directors this summer, one official spokesman thought it necessary to advise them that "work does not fill up the life of the people." V. Sukharevitch,

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a literary critic, writing in *Literaturnaia Gazeta* (August 13th, 1955), asserted that Soviet literature had described all the spheres of human struggle and toil, but . . .

. . . however great an effort we make, we cannot remember any characters in love, with the possible exception of Grigori and Axinia from Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don* and a very few others. And Grigori, *horribile dictu,* was a "White Guard"!

After so many years of intense effort and sacrifices, there is an overwhelming longing for more privacy, and the rediscovery of sex is but one aspect (though probably the most important) of this longing. The leaders had to comply, or at least to compromise, with this deep urge. Since 1954 most of the published novels prominently feature a love story side by side with the familiar production angle: some even enthusiastically describe two, three or more love stories.

It was comparatively easy to ridicule the Stakhanovite-marries-shockworker books of the last fifteen years; but it has been far more difficult to improve things. Soviet writers (with a few exceptions belonging to the older generation) had simply never written on love and sex. They did not know how to approach their subject. Their first steps in the new direction were very unsteady and frequently slightly comic.

There was an additional difficulty: Russian classical literature on the whole lacks any tradition of writing about physical love. Anna Karenina is a novel about adultery, to be sure, but intimacies are only seldom described, and anything pertaining to the physical act is never mentioned. A change came only after the turn of the century, when various modernist schools spread in Russia, and the first "discovery of sex" in Russian literature coincided with the prevalence of decadent trends: Mikhail Kuzmin, Anastasia Verbitskaya, and—most notorious of all—Artzybashev in his *Sanin* (1907). All of these are, of course, utterly outside the Soviet pale from a political point of view. There was no naturalist school in Russia in the late nineteenth century which could have suggested to Soviet writers that a frank discussion of sex could be connected with "progressive" politics. To be sure, there was always Maxim Gorki—but it is quite unthinkable that any Soviet novelist should write today as freely on the facts of life among the poor and the outcast as did Gorki (especially the young Gorki). And so the Soviet writers move quite awkwardly—like people who have not seen the sun for a long time and have to get slowly accustomed to the brightness of the light.

What Price Virtue?

TAKE, for instance, the new novel by V. Ashayev, whose *Far from Moscow* was the big success of the postwar period. Tanya loves Mikhail and the two walk for many hours through Moscow at night. At last they retire to the flat of Tanya's parents who are at present staying at their *dacha*, or villa, outside the city. Both are too excited to sleep and the author prepares us for the worst. But then, all of a sudden, Tanya gets a nettle rash and Mikhail has to rub her legs with alcohol. This again makes them excited, they forget the nettles and the rash. Mikhail holds the girl in his arms, kisses her lips, eyes, and shoulders. Their hot breaths meet. "Mikhail, we are alone in the house," Tanya says desperately and urgently. "My parents are in the *dacha*. I do not want to do this to them. I am afraid for our love." But Mikhail is up to the situation. He feels a burning choke in his throat. With a radiant smile he lays Tanya in her bed like a small child. Mikhail spends the rest of the night in an imaginary discussion with Tanya's father, a learned palaeontologist, who argues that his daughter is too young to marry. And that's that.

Yelena, by K. Lvova, is probably the most discussed Soviet novel of the year. Yelena is a scientist who is married; she also has a lover. At the moment when she has to choose between lover and husband, she is spared by being transferred to some remote part of the Soviet Union. When expecting a child from her lover she has a road accident, another *deus ex machina* that eliminates a difficult dilemma. After all this, Yelena nevertheless emerges as a "positive hero," and it is not surprising that the author was violently attacked by the Komsomol newspaper for "glorifying moral corruption." But she also has found supporters, which is rather more surprising and interesting.

While Ashayev's and Lvova's novels had a mixed reception, Daniel Granin's *Those Who Seek* has been acclaimed as one of the best books of the past year. It describes, among other things, the affair of Andrei Lobanov, an engineer, with Rita, a married woman. By Soviet standards it is quite risqué—not the subject as such but Granin's treatment:

Rita moved towards him, but he drew away, demanding an answer. He felt the pain he caused her by his rebuff. . . . "I need you, I need you always, but I can't go on like this. . . . This room . . . your friend. . . . Can't you yourself see how sordid it all is?" Rita lay back on the bed and placed her hands behind her head. Her small breasts were

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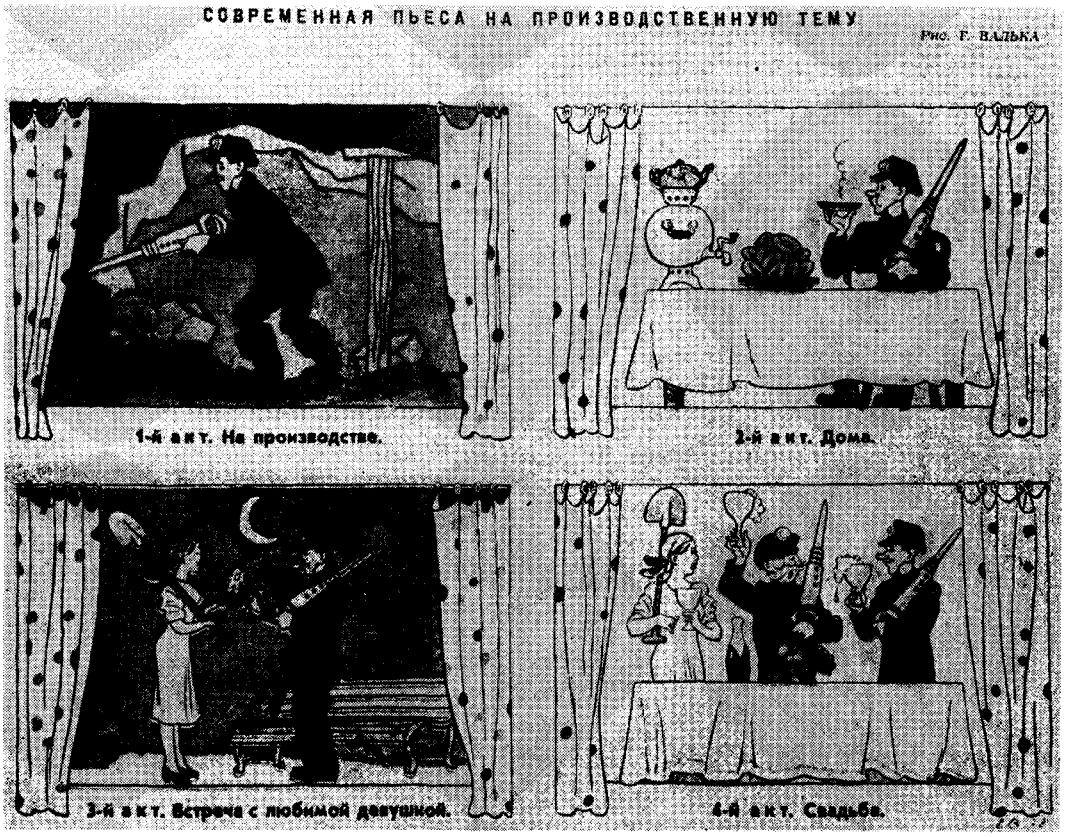

A CONTEMPORARY PLAY ON AN INDUSTRIAL THEME

First Act: At Work.
Second Act: At Home.
Third Act: A meeting with his sweetheart.
Fourth Act: The Wedding.

Krokodil, Moscow, May 10, 1952

clearly outlined under the blouse. Again she sighed wistfully. "How ungrateful of you. Come to me. Come, dear. . . . What are you afraid of in me? . . ." He tried not to look at her unbuttoned blouse, at her long, finely-shaped legs. . . .

But in the end Andrei finds the inner strength to put an end to that sordid affair, and virtue is suitably rewarded by the author.

However, virtue is not always rewarded in recent Soviet novels. Andrei, in Yelena Katerli's *Long Road*, is a nice chap, a good Communist, a competent editor of the local newspaper. And yet Lyuba, the girl he loves, marries somebody else and there is no consolation for Andrei but work. The book ends:

As Andrei walked along the street he thought about the things he had to do. To set about editing *Tribuna* properly. Recently he had worked without enthusiasm, the last issue was dull.

There is no consolation either for Antonina in the same novel, who loves Yasha, a young rascal, and even has a child by him. Yasha belongs to the "*stilyagi*," the Soviet *jeunesse dorée*, who dress smartly, smell of *eau de cologne*, drink heavily, and prefer the foxtrot to the polka: "The polka is only for the nursery."

It is still a far cry from the spirit of frankness and experimentation which prevailed in Soviet literature in the 1920's to the present, hesitant relaxation from prudery. The timid moves of today may well constitute the absolute limit for years to come. Nevertheless, their importance can be underrated. The reaction to decades of collectivization of private life seems to be in full swing in the Soviet Union, and the literary stirrings are but a faint reflection of it. People outside a totalitarian regime too easily forget that love and sex are "discouraged" there because they impede the enforced fusion of society. They are, in an indirect fashion but quite literally, "enemies of the regime." When attention is paid to love and sex, individuals become important—even the inner lives of individuals. In the long run, the rediscovery of love and sex in the Soviet literature of 1954–55 may well enter history as an event more important than some of the politico-diplomatic trends which seem to be developing.

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Old Writers Between New Covers

A RECENT issue of a Soviet literary monthly contained selections from the writings of Ivan Bunin, the only Russian ever to have received the Nobel Prize for literature. Bunin left Russia in 1918 and died in France in 1953. The Soviet editors, in a short introduction, observed that Bunin had never understood the Communist revolution and that his political views and writings were unworthy of him. But they did go ahead to print him, and the very appearance of an émigré writer in a leading Soviet magazine throws some fresh light on the state of mind of those who are now setting the direction of Soviet literature.

The Soviet attitude to émigré writers, as to "doubtful characters" in Russian literary history in general, has not been consistent. Broadly speaking, it can be said that more cultural latitude is given to the publishing houses whenever a more liberal political line prevails, as in 1934–5 and 1942–5. During World War II, novels by Dostoievsky and Leskov were freely published. After 1946 such publication ceased and the literary critics again attacked the "reactionary and confused character" of Dostoievsky's writings. After Stalin's death, Dostoievsky reappeared in the form of *The Village Stepantikovo and its Inhabitants*, a minor but vivid novel. And this past July, an edition of *Crime and Punishment* came out, the first in many years.[2] Also published were works by some of the minor writers of the 1870–80's, such as Pomyalovsky (a man who drank too much and described mainly the goings-on in Orthodox seminaries), and by a few of the "reactionaries" of the 1860's such as the Aksakov brothers.

The same vacillations can be noted *vis-à-vis* writers and books of the earlier periods of Soviet literature. Perhaps most typical of the fate of such literature is Mikhail Bulgakov's play, *The Days of the Turbins*, which is based on a novel by the same writer written back in 1924. The scene is in the Ukraine in 1918. The Turbin brothers are officers in the White armies during the Civil War. Yet both are "positive heroes" in the modern Soviet sense, and there is not a single Communist in the whole play. In the end, the Turbin brothers do change sides: they have become convinced that as Russian patriots they have to support the Communists, not the various Ukrainian atamans, because only the former stand for Russian unity. Their conversion is for exclusively national reasons, not because they have accepted Communist ideology.

The Days of the Turbins (which, incidentally, includes a playing of "God Save the Tsar") was a big success in Moscow in the late 1920's, but was soon forbidden. The play was again permitted for a short time in the early 1930's, but was once more banned after about a year. For the last 20 years or so, *The Days of the Turbins* has not been performed, nor has its author (who died in 1936) been mentioned in the Soviet press. At the Writers' Congress last winter, however, Veniamin Kaverin, a Soviet writer of the older generation, suggested a new performance of the play, and according to a recent report it is included among the repertoire of a leading Moscow theatre. It should be stressed that Dostoievsky or Bulgakov are "border-line" cases for the Communists; not a single major Soviet writer who fell victim to the big purges (*e. g.*, B. Pilnyak or I. Babel) has been posthumously rehabilitated.

The Past Appropriated

FOR the prerevolutionary literary heritage, we have now a fairly accurate up-to-date yardstick of Soviet opinion. It is the tenth volume of the *History of Russian Literature*, published by the Academy of Science some months ago. A big, exquisitely produced volume, it deals with the period most interesting in this context: 1890–1917. About half of this great volume (more than 800 pages) deals with Gorki, Gorki's pupils, and Lenin's influence on Russian literature. (Gorki is described as a disciple of Lenin who occasionally strayed from the ideological instructions given by the master.) Stalin and Andrei Zhdanov are quoted time and again as final arbiters; the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky owes his place in this history to a chance remark by Stalin, while Georgi Plekhanov survives—despite his unsavory political record, from the Communist point of view—because he received a good notice in Zhdanov's famous speech in 1946. Some of the exceedingly third-rate writers of the time who later became Communists are inflated out of all measure and made into leading literary figures. (Or perhaps they are not really overrated but simply have to be played up because the Bolsheviks had so few sympathizers among the prerevolutionary intelligentsia.) As for party affiliations, it seems roughly to be the case that the Soviet editors prefer members or sympathizers of

[2] *The New York Times* of October 23, 1955, p. 35, reports that the official Soviet publishing house Goslitizdat has announced it "will issue a complete collection of [Dostoievsky's] fiction works in ten volumes" beginning in February 1956. It remains to be seen whether ten volumes—a rather small figure for the prodigious output of the great writer—will include such "reactionary" works as *Brothers Karamazov* and *The Possessed*.—Editors.

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bourgeois parties to Social Revolutionaries, and Social Revolutionaries to Mensheviks.

What is perhaps most significant in this book is the attempt, by fair means and foul, to adopt all the major prerevolutionary realistic writers, regardless of their political orientation. A whole chapter is dedicated to Bunin (but only ten lines to his many works after 1917, thereby omitting mention of some of his most important writings); for Bunin, after all, is the greatest of those writing in the classical tradition of Tolstoy and Dostoievsky. In a sense, Bunin is nearer to socialist realism than Gorki, especially the early impressionist and violent Gorki. The volume of the *History* is full of crying injustices and distortions. But somehow or other, often with considerable ingenuity, the editors do succeed in laying claim to most of the important writers of the Russian and Soviet past. If the writer in question was an incorrigible individualist, far removed from the social and intellectual currents of his day, he now can be safely described as a "great Russian patriot." Usually, the Soviet editors also can find in his lifetime some form of mild protest, if only once or twice, against the powers-that-were, which can now be emphasized as an indication of how the spirit of progress permeated that particular writer. In any case, whatever the reasons, most of the great Russian writers are thus saved for Communist posterity.

This sometimes ludicrous effort to appropriate as much as possible from the Russian literary heritage will probably have beneficial effects in the long run. It means that certain standards of creativity are preserved; and, further, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the books of the great Russian writers of the nineteenth century are some kind of an antidote to totalitarian ideology. The Soviet reader will tend to compare Soviet literary output of the present day with the great chain of literature from Pushkin to Chekhov and Gorki, and this is bound to raise questions in his mind. It is not utopian to hope that these questions will be asked each year with an ever greater emphasis.

New Trend In Soviet Justice?

By VLADIMIR GSOVSKI

SINCE the death of Stalin in March 1953, there have occurred in the USSR a number of developments which have been widely interpreted outside the Communist orbit as harbingers of a liberalization of the Soviet system of legal justice. Of these developments, the two amnesties decreed by Stalin's successors—the first on March 27, 1953, immediately after his demise, and the second on September 17, 1955— have roused particular interest.

In this observer's view, however, there is reason to question any hasty assumption that the Soviet amnesties really signify a trend toward a substantive liberalization of the legal concepts and institutions of the USSR. An amnesty, by its very nature, has a specific and limited application; it does not necessarily have a direct effect on the established legal system. Generally, it is more reflective of temporary political considerations than of intent to bring about enduring legal reforms. This was clearly true of the March 1953 amnesty, as numerous earlier analyses have pointed out.[1] The present article will endeavor to probe the real significance of the second amnesty of last September from the same standpoint and then will explore briefly other recent developments which shed light on the existence or non-existence of a liberalizing trend in the Soviet legal sphere.

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[1] For an analysis of the first post-Stalin amnesty, see the author's article in *Problems of Communism*, No. 6, Vol. II (1953).

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The predominantly political motivation of the September amnesty is so manifest as to require scant discussion. Designed as a show of mercy toward those Soviet citizens or ex-citizens considered to be collaborators with the enemy during World War II, the amnesty is clearly a tactic in the campaign launched during 1955 to attract Soviet émigrés abroad back to the Soviet Union. That campaign opened with the creation in East Berlin of a Committee for Return to the Motherland and the publication of an irregularly issued paper *Za Vozvrashchenie na Rodinu* (Return to the Motherland), five numbers of which have appeared since April 1955.

If the purpose of the amnesty is clear, its provisions could hardly be more obscure. The more one studies the several paragraphs of this short document, the greater one's perplexity. First, the preamble states that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet deems it possible to grant amnesty to those "who, owing to lack of courage and unawareness of responsibility, were drawn into . . . collaboration" with the Germans. It is not made clear whether this is a mere declaratory statement or whether it is a prerequisite for the application of amnesty *additional* to the conditions outlined in the main body of the edict. Does the preamble exclude those who collaborated for other reasons—*e.g.*, conscious opposition to the Soviet regime? There is no way of telling.

Other ambiguities arise from the fact that the amnesty has two separate sets of provisions: one applicable to persons convicted (or to be convicted) in the Soviet Union and one set for persons who have escaped or stayed abroad.

Amnesty for Defectors Living Abroad

THE decree distinguishes three categories of persons residing abroad, but none of them is clearly defined; thus a person expecting to be in one category might easily find himself classified in another.

The first category embraces those who "surrendered to the enemy or have served in the German army, police and special German units." "Special units" evidently denotes such groups as General Vlasov's famed army of soldier-defectors as well as Cossack and Ukrainian outfits who fought with the Germans during World War II. These persons are promised that they will be "relieved of responsibility," apparently unconditionally, for their wartime defection (Section 7, Paragraph 1).

Another category consists of those "who occupied, during the war, leading posts in the agencies of the police, gendarmerie, and propaganda created by the occupiers, including those drawn into anti-Soviet organizations in the postwar period." These are relieved from responsibility under one condition: *viz*, "if they have expiated their guilt by subsequent patriotic activities for the motherland or have surrendered [to Soviet authorities] with a full confession of their guilt" (Section 7, Paragraph 2).

"Soviet citizens who are abroad and who, during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945, committed serious crimes against the Soviet state" form a third group. Their voluntary surrender to Soviet authorities and confession of guilt are to be treated merely as an extenuating circumstance; however, "no severer penalty than five years of banishment" may be imposed on them by a court (Section 7, Paragraph 3).

The vague language of these three paragraphs makes it difficult to establish any line of demarcation between them. For example, the difference between the second and third categories is that persons in the former occupied "leading posts" in the German police, gendarmerie and propaganda agencies, or joined anti-Soviet organizations in the postwar period, while those in the third category "committed serious crimes against the Soviet state." What posts would be considered "leading" and what crimes deemed "serious crimes against the Soviet state" is neither explained in the amnesty itself nor deducible from Soviet criminal law in general. There is no doubt, however, that service in the enemy army during the war could be considered a "serious crime"; thus, while it is pardoned under the first category of the amnesty, the charge could be brought easily under the third category.

Similarly, if a person who had served with the German police in a minor capacity wanted to return to the Soviet Union, expecting that he would be unconditionally covered by the amnesty (under Section 7, Paragraph 2), he might be told that his post was a "leading" one and that he must first "expiate his guilt by patriotic activities"—perhaps as an agent for the Soviets abroad. Or he might be admitted to the USSR and then told that his activities had constituted a "serious crime against the Soviet state," in which case he would face the prospect of trial and sentence to five years' banishment to the far north, or possibly a lesser period in a corrective labor camp.

Even if the amnesty is interpreted in the most benevolent manner, it does not protect against later arrest and incarceration. It offers no exemption from the prevailing regulation that any person who represents "a social danger" in the eyes of the Ministry of the Interior may be confined to a camp of correctional labor for a period up to five years, banished to

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a far corner of the USSR, or prohibited from residing in certain places. The power to impose such penalties was given to a Special Board of the Ministry under a statute of 1934 which is still in force. The Board can use its authority with unlimited discretion merely upon finding that a person is "socially dangerous." Since the amnesty does not explicitly bar later prosecution by such administrative action, its other guarantees of immunity are rendered highly suspect.

Amnesty for Persons Serving Sentences in the Soviet Union

AMONG persons convicted and serving sentence in the Soviet Union, two groups are distinguished by the edict, both categories again being highly ambiguous. The first group is defined merely as persons "convicted for service in the German army, police, and special German units" (Section 3). These persons are "to be released from places of confinement regardless of the term of confinement." They are also to be freed from banishment or forced residence.

The second group is defined as those "convicted for aid to the enemy and other crimes specified in Sections 58.1, 58.3, 58.4, 58.6, 58.10, and 58.12 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR [Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic] and corresponding sections of the codes of other Soviet republics." Within this group, persons sentenced to not more than 10 years of confinement are pardoned totally (Section 1). For those whose term exceeds ten years, the sentence is reduced by one-half (Section 2). Cases involving the above-mentioned sections and not yet adjudicated are to be dismissed (Section 5).

At the outset, it may be noted that most cases involving collaboration with the Germans were tried in 1945 and 1946; hence, those sentenced up to 10 years have by now completely or nearly served their terms.

The fact that references to the Criminal Code are given for the second group and omitted for the first group creates another important ambiguity. To comprehend this point, one must bear in mind the difference between conviction by Soviet courts and confinement in a camp of correctional labor by order of the Ministry of Interior. As noted above, the Ministry does not have to specify the deed of the suspect in terms of the Criminal Code; it need only state that he is "socially dangerous." In contrast, a court conviction must indicate a section or sections of the Criminal Code which specify an offense "most similar" to that committed.

The amnesty, in defining the two above-mentioned groups, uses the word "convicted" (*osuzhdennye*) in reference to both. In Soviet law this term generally connotes those convicted in court. Thus it can be presumed that persons in both categories were convicted by court action under specific sections of the Criminal Code—in particular Section 58, several subsections of which were cited in the amnesty's definition of the second category of prisoners. Section 58 deals with "counterrevolutionary" crimes and presumably is designed to protect the safety of the Soviet state. Subsection 58.1, the first mentioned in the amnesty, generally defines a counterrevolutionary crime as "any act directed towards the overthrow, undermining or weakening" of Soviet central and local government, "or towards the undermining of the external security of the Soviet Union and of the basic economic, political and national conquests of the proletarian revolution." There can be little doubt that this clause in particular was invoked in court convictions for such activities as "service in the German army, German police or German special units" during World War II.

Why, then, did the amnesty omit reference to Section 58 in delineating the first category of prisoners? The only logical explanation is that it was intended to give wider scope for arbitrary application of the amnesty.

The mystery deepens when the provisions of all subsections of Section 58—both those mentioned as well as those not mentioned in the amnesty statute—are compared. The amnesty omits Subsections 58.1(a) and 58.1(b) which deal with the crime of treason, defined as "activities prejudicial to the military might of the Soviet Union, its political independence and integrity of its territory, such as espionage, disclosure of military or state secrets, defection to the enemy, flight by air or otherwise abroad." Parts of this clause seem to fit the activities for which a total pardon is promised in Section 3 of the amnesty; certainly service in the German army is tantamount to "defection to the enemy." If so, which provision of the amnesty edict prevails, that of Section 3 or of Section 1, if they are in conflict?

Among the subsections of Section 58 omitted in the amnesty, there is one which officially sanctioned the seizure of hostages, frankly providing for the penalizing of innocent adult members of the family of a defector. This is Section 58.1 (c), which orders that in case of flight abroad by a man (woman) in military service, all adult members of his family who helped him or knew about the contemplated treason are subject to confinement from five to ten years; those who did not know of his planned defection but who lived with him or were dependent on him are subject to exile to remote places in Siberia for five years. Since

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this section is omitted in the enumeration of those for which amnesty is granted, it would appear that penalties imposed under it are not pardoned.

The amnesty does not mention Section 58.1 (d), condemning failure of a man in military service to report a contemplated or committed treason, but does mention Section 58.12, concerning a similar failure by any person to report a "counterrevolutionary crime." It omits Section 58.2 dealing with armed insurrection or invasion by armed bands with counterrevolutionary intent, seizure of central or local authority, *etc.* But it mentions Section 58.3, communication with representatives of foreign powers with counterrevolutionary intent; Section 58.4, aid in inimical activities against the Soviet Union; and Section 58.6, espionage. The amnesty does not cite Section 58.8, commission of acts of terrorism against representatives of the Soviet government, but includes Section 58.10, propaganda or incitement containing an appeal for the overthrow, subversion or weakening of the Soviet power. The reason for which some of the subsections were singled out is not clear. Nor is the real significance of omitting certain subsections understood. Does it mean that acts mentioned therein do not come under the amnesty or that they are pardoned totally, without regard to the term of confinement, insofar as they relate to service in the German army, police, and special formations (*i.e.*, under Section 3)?

It is clear, then, that the September amnesty, like its predecessor, is enshrouded in manifold ambiguities both as it relates to defectors abroad and in its provisions dealing with persons convicted in the Soviet Union. It is also clear beyond all peradventure of doubt that its essential purpose was political: to entice displaced Soviet nationals abroad to return to the USSR. Pardoning them would not make any sense if those sentenced and imprisoned in the Soviet Union for the same offenses were not shown the same magnanimity.

As for any possible repercussions on the Soviet legal system, these must remain unassessable until it becomes clear what interpretation is being placed on these ambiguous provisions in actual practice. One may surmise, however, that the lack of clarity is not by any means the sole result of careless drafting by Soviet legal experts, but is in some measure deliberate. In any event, the effect is to leave the regime a broad degree of discretion to apply the amnesty when and where it sees fit.

Promise and Present Reality

IF THE amnesty does not seem a very convincing harbinger of liberalization in the Soviet legal system, are there any other portents that such a trend is underway or in the offing? Here, there would appear to be a wide gap between promise and reality.

Concurrently with the first amnesty of March 1953, the Soviet regime announced that a unified legal code for the entire country would soon be substituted for the separate codes of the constituent republics. The new code, it was promised, would be more lenient in that disciplinary measures without incarceration would replace various criminal penalties. Following this announcement, the Soviet press began to stress "legality" and "respect for the rights of individuals," especially in connection with the regime's *volte face* on the notorious Moscow "doctors' plot" and with the later execution of the hated Lavrenti Beria.

At the beginning of 1955, the promised code had not yet materialized. However, in the January (No. 2) issue of *Kommunist*, organ of the CPSU Cen-

Application of the Amnesty: Case of A. M. Novikov

The following case, one of the first reported applications of the Soviet amnesty of September 1955, underscores the ambiguous and higly arbitrary nature of the edict. Significantly, the announcement was an official communique of the Committee for State Security (KGB), reported in *Izvestia* (November 25, 1955): A. M. Novikov, a Belorussian, was deported in 1942 to Germany for agricultural work. After the war, he fell prey to "anti-Soviet propaganda," refused repatriation, and went to Morocco. In 1952 he joined an "anti-Soviet organization which soon transferred him to one of the intelligence agencies in Western Germany." After receiving training he was given false documents and an "espionage assignment" and parachuted into Belorussia. Soon thereafter he read the text of the September amnesty and decided to surrender to the authorities, turning in his "radio transmitter, weapons, false documents, and other spying apparatus." Soviet "judicial organs" [an interesting ambiguity since the case was reported by the KGB] convicted him to five years' banishment in accordance with Article 7 of the amnesty.

The facts as stated in *Izvestia* suggest that Novikov expected a full pardon under the provisions of the amnesty dealing with membership in a postwar anti-Soviet organization and voluntary surrender to the Soviet authorities. Instead he was prosecuted under the provision of the amnesty applying to "those who have committed serious crimes against the Soviet state." The communique did not specify which of his actions constituted "serious crimes"—V. G.

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tral Committee, Justice Minister K. Gorshenin reiterated the promise. He stated that the new code would deal more leniently than the existing laws with "infractions and malfeasances" in the economic sphere, and also that numerous arbitrary legal practices would be curtailed. "Major crimes," however, would be punished even more severely than at present.

Obviously, a complete and definitive answer to the question of whether the regime intends to liberalize the legal system must await the appearance of the code, at least in draft form. There is as yet no sign how soon it will be forthcoming, if indeed the regime still intends to honor its promise.[2] In the meantime, one can only judge by the record to date. This record shows two significant things: (1) the persistence of what are, by accepted Western legal standards, unjust and cruel judicial practices; and (2) new examples of severity in legal procedure.

Interestingly, the only major law which has been published since Stalin's death is in keeping with Minister of Justice Gorshenin's aforementioned forecast of greater severity for certain crimes (as against his stress on leniency): on April 10, 1954, the death penalty was established for murder of a nonpolitical nature, a crime which previously had been punished by ten years of imprisonment. Soviet newspapers have printed several instances of the application of the death penalty under this new law (*e.g.*, *Bakinsky Rabochii* [Baku Worker], October 22, 1955; *Kazakhstanskaia Pravda* [Kazakhstan Truth], September 6, 1955).

As for the persistence—not only on the statute books, but in practice—of certain harsh features of Soviet law, only a few examples can be cited here. Among the more important, there apparently has been no change in the severe penalties imposed for certain economic crimes. Thus, in a recent case, a citizen was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for having resold a passenger automobile for which no government ceiling price had been established (*Izvestia*, November 8, 1954). In another case, a man was sentenced to ten years and his wife to eight for taking "rugs, woolen blouses, jumpers and woolen material" from Moscow to Alma Ata for resale at a higher price (*Kazakhstanskaia Pravda*, October 13, 1955). If these cases are an example of what Minister Gorshenin meant by "leniency" for "infractions and malfeasances in the economic sphere," the prospect for a just and fair new code seems dim.

[2] There have already been some changes in Soviet labor law. These will be treated as a separate subject in a forthcoming article by Jerzy Gliksman.—Editors.

It is also obvious that as long as the dreaded "Special Board" of the Ministry of Interior continues in existence, it remains a prime instrument for the perpetuation of arbitrary justice. As noted above, the Special Board officially has the power to incarcerate any person or persons the regime deems "socially dangerous" for a period up to five years; its victims are condemned without trial. Recently an American visitor to the USSR was told by Soviet officials that the Special Board had been abolished by edict. When pressed for evidence, however, the officials were unable to produce the document by which the action allegedly was taken.[3] In the absence of any such concrete evidence, the Special Board must still be presumed to be in existence officially, even if the regime is not making use of it at the moment.

As for new instances negating a "liberal" trend in Soviet law, the most revealing was the enactment of a new statute last May affecting pre-trial investigations of major cases. To understand the significance of the statute, it is necessary to trace a little of the background in this area.

In Tsarist Russia, from the judicial reforms of 1864 up to the Bolshevik Revolution, every major criminal case, before being committed to trial, was investigated by a judge (*sudebny sledovatel*) who was independent of the public prosecutor and whose job was to bring to light all circumstances of the case, both those incriminating and those exonerating the suspect. Designed to safeguard an innocent person from indictment, the pre-trial investigation had the character of a judicial procedure. Thus it constituted the protection of individual rights afforded, in Western law, by such legal institutions as *habeas corpus*.

At the beginning of the Soviet regime, the judicial investigators were abolished, together with the old courts, and no new judicial system was settled on until 1923. Then the pre-trial procedure was assigned to "people's investigators" and not to "judicial investigators." Gradually the investigators were exempted from the supervision of the courts and brought under control of the prosecuting attorneys.

A recent statute on government attorneys (public prosecutors—*prokurorski nadzor*), enacted on May 24, 1955 (*Vedomosti verkhovnovo soveta*, 1955, Text 222), sets into sharp relief the complete absence of independence on the part of investigators. According to the statute, the investigators "shall be appointed and discharged" in a manner "to be established by the Attorney General" (Section 54). In other words,

[3] *New York Times*, December 16, 1955, p. 1.

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investigators are to be appointed and dismissed not as prescribed by law but as directed by the Attorney General. Directives from the public prosecutor regarding the conduct of investigations are mandatory for the investigator (Section 20). The public prosecutor has the right to set aside any resolution of the investigator as well as the right to transfer the conduct of the investigation from one investigator to another (Section 19, Subsections 5 and 7). While under the imperial law appeals from the acts of the investigator could be brought to court, now such appeals must be made to the public prosecutor.

In the light of all the developments to date, one is justified in concluding that neither the vague provisions and blatant political rationale of the latest amnesty, nor other recent developments in Soviet law, offer any basis for expecting a fundamental change in the Soviet concept of justice and legality. There have been some changes, and they no doubt have had their impact on the daily lives of the Soviet citizen. But the basic structure of the legal apparatus has not been altered, and its prime purpose still remains, in the words of the late Andrei Vishinsky, to ". . . guard, strengthen and develop the social relations and arrangements advantageous to and desired by the ruling class"—*i. e.*, the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.[4]

[4] Andrei Vishinsky, *Sovetskoe gosudarstvennoe pravo* (Soviet Public Law), Moscow, Gosizdat, 1938, pp. 52–3.

Dogma vs. Science in Soviet Statistics

By STEPHAN E. SCHATTMAN

TO ANYONE seeking evidence of the effects of the onslaught of Communist totalitarian ideology on scientific freedom, developments in the field of Soviet statistical science over the last five years are of considerable interest and significance. These developments appear closely related to similar trends which have affected other branches of science in the Soviet Union, such as genetics, biology and physics. The emergent pattern seems to suggest at least the beginning of a retreat from the extreme Stalinist policy which aimed at subjugating all forms of scientific inquiry to the rigid pseudo-scientific dogmas of Marxism-Leninism.

This is not to say that the ideological shackles which confine Soviet science have been stricken away. Rather than any abondonment of the basic dogmas, what appears to have taken place during the last few years—and particularly since the death of Stalin—is a slight loosening of the straitjacket upon science in favor of a more rational, pragmatic and flexible policy. A principal cause of this shift undoubtedly has been the Kremlin's belated recognition of the stultifying effect of rigid Stalinist orthodoxy on the progress of Soviet science as a whole, with possibly serious consequences for the Soviet position in the new era of "competitive coexistence" between East and West. The evidence bearing specifically upon the changed official attitude toward statistical science supports this hypothesis.

Mr. Schattman is a British economist presently engaged in a special study of economic conditions and problems of the Soviet orbit. He was formerly on the research staff of the British Broadcasting Corporation, European Division.

Stalinization and Scientific Freedom

SOVIET statisticians, interestingly enough, were among the first to suffer the impact of the Stalinist assault on scientific freedom. Many of the foremost representatives of the economic and statistical sciences in the USSR fell victim to a purge in 1929–30, which marked the beginning of the assault first on one science and then another. However, in this period, the regime's action against statisticians was on the plane of practical policy enforcement: its purpose was to get rid of those whose evaluations of economic conditions and prospects were inimical to

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the industrialization and collectivization policies of the first Five-Year Plan.[1] By contrast, there was no attempt, until the later years of the Stalinist period, to make the theoretical development of statistical science conform to Marxist dogma.

Thanks to this doctrinal non-interference, as distinct from rigid official control over practical statistical work, Soviet statistical science continued to develop along the same lines as in the West. Indeed, modern Western statistical theory already owed much to the contributions of nineteenth-century Russian mathematicians, especially P. I. Chebychev, in the field of probability; under the Soviet regime this tradition was carried on by a worthy successor to Chebychev's mantle, Andrei Kolmogorov, acknowledged to be one of the world's outstanding mathematical scholars.

No less than their bourgeois counterparts, Soviet statistical theorists considered themselves the propounders of a science, or scientific research method, universally applicable to the study and analysis of mass phenomena, whether in the natural world or in the realm of society. As in the West, their basic conceptual tools were the mathematical theory of probability, the "law of large numbers," and the related concepts which together constitute the main theoretical foundations of modern applied statistical techniques such as sampling and quality control in industry.[2]

The Stalin regime seemingly regarded the concordance of Soviet statistical doctrine with that of the bourgeois West as of little consequence in the 1930's. The absence of official concern was evident in the fact that the first edition of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, which necessarily hews to the party line wherever one has been laid down, contains articles defining statistics in terms fully in agreement with Western concepts.[3]

Even before the end of the 1930's, however, there were signs of a growing tendency on the part of the Stalinist regime to attempt to isolate Soviet science from "contaminating" Western influences and to force it into the confining straitjacket of Marxist-Leninist dogma. The tendency manifested itself most clearly in the field of genetics, where Trofim Lysenko won strong party support for his quack theories in opposition to hitherto generally accepted scientific doctrine. The 1948 enthronement of Lysenko as the virtual dictator of Soviet biology marked the culmination of this process, which was paralleled in other scientific fields. By 1949 there were clearcut indications that statistical science was to be the next victim.

The warning signs were mounting complaints and denunciations directed against the dissemination of "bourgeois" concepts in textbooks on statistics—some of them postwar publications—and against the "incorrect" teaching of statistical theory in academic institutions. These complaints were voiced by the Central Statistical Administration, the top governmental agency charged with the collection and analysis of statistical data, but probably were party-inspired. CSA officials began demanding repudiation of bourgeois concepts in favor of an orthodox party theory of statistics consistent with Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Dogma and Scientific Truth

THE threat which an independent and universal science of statistics presented to the Communist scheme of things was, essentially, no different from that presented by any other science seeking to determine objective truth. In the extreme Marxian view, all phenomena, both social and natural, occur in accordance with the scientific laws of dialectical and historical materialism. The Marxist who espouses this general proposition cannot possibly accept the existence of any independent scientific research method which claims universal applicability, since it might produce findings not in harmony with these "predetermined" laws.

To obviate this danger, the proponents of the orthodox school proceeded to formulate a highly arbitrary and artificial redefinition of statistics which would assure its subordination to Marxist dogma. The first step in this redefinition was to reject the universal applicability of statistical methods to the study of both nature and society on the ground that natural and social phenomena are fundamentally different and require different methods of scientific inquiry. Statistics, they contended, can properly be applied only to the study of social and economic phenomena and therefore constitutes a purely socio-economic science.

[1] Two of the most prominent victims of the 1929–30 purge were N. D. Kondratyev, head of the independent Moscow Business Cycle Institute, and V. G. Groman, a leading official of the State Planning Commission and the Central Statistical Administration of the USSR.

[2] See R. S. Burington and D. C. May, *Handbook of Probability and Statistics*, Handbook Publishers, Inc., Sandusky, Ohio, 1953.

[3] The article on statistics, written by I. Yu. Pisarev, stated *inter alia* that statistics was a scientific method for the investigation of mass phenomena in both nature and society. V. N. Starovski, in a separate article on economic statistics, identified statistics with the theory of spontaneous accidental mass processes and stated that sampling was the most representative method of statistical research. *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, 1st Edition, Vol. 63, Moscow, 1935, pp. 279–283.

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Having thus "refuted" the universal character of statistics by means of an argument which not only disregarded reality but contradicted certain of Marx's concepts on the dialectical relationship between society and nature, the orthodox theorists went on to devise a further restriction on the scope of statistics *within* the socio-economic field. In accordance with the classic Marxist differentiation between the "base" (economic forces of production and productive relations) and "superstructure" (political forms, religion, ethics, science, *etc.*) of society, they argued that statistics might properly examine both the base and certain elements of the superstructure *at a given phase of their development* but could not inquire into the laws of development themselves, already formulated by Marxist-Leninist political economy on the basis of dialectical and historical materialism. Furthermore, as a socio-economic science, statistics itself forms a part of the superstructure of society and therefore, like all the superstructural elements, has a definite class and party character determined by the base.

Thus, the orthodox theorists of the Central Statistical Administration produced a definition which dovetailed neatly with Lenin's dictum that "statistics should illustrate [but not investigate] social-economic relations that have been revealed by an all-sided analysis," *i.e.*, by analysis in terms of Marxist political economy.[4] Once this ideological framework was established, statistics was reduced to little more than an innocuous form of economic accounting, and it was guaranteed that all facts and figures conflicting with Communist dogma would be excluded from the outset. Moreover, by stamping statistics as a "class and party science," all danger was eliminated that the results of statistical research would not prove what the regime expected of them.

Modern Inquisition á la Soviet

IT REMAINED, however, to impose the new orthodox doctrine on Soviet statistical scientists, and for this purpose the Central Statistical Administration convoked a conference on methodology at Moscow in February 1950. The proceedings of the conference, as well as the new doctrine laid down during its discussions, were the subject of a highly illuminating critical analysis by Dr. Stuart A. Rice, the eminent American statistician, in a paper presented at the 27th session of the International Statistical Institute at New Delhi, India in 1951.[5] As Dr. Rice implies in his paper, the published summary of the conference discussions gives a very definite impression that the proceedings were a carefully planned and well rehearsed stage performance.[6]

Curiously enough, the leading roles in the conference proceedings were played by the same two men whose articles on statistics in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, written some 15 years earlier, had conformed to the "bourgeois" concepts which were now singled out for concerted attack. V. N. Starovski, who in the interval had risen from professorial ranks to become head of the CSA, emerged as the chief standard-bearer for the new party-approved theory of statistics, while I. Yu. Pisarev, though himself a member of the CSA staff, was cast in the unenviable role of symbolic and penitent scapegoat for those academicians allegedly guilty of bourgeois deviationism.

As presiding officer, Starovski promptly set the tone of the conference by launching an attack on the "harmful bourgeois influences and anti-Marxist distortions" still prevalent in Soviet statistical science and its literature. The worst offenders, he declared, were the followers of the "formalist-mathematical school" who held statistics to be a "universal science—based ultimately on the mathematical law of large numbers and not on Marxist-Leninist theory."

V. A. Sobol, editor of the official CSA journal *Vestnik Statistiki*, then set forth the "correct" statistical doctrine as approved by the regime. Defining statistics as a social science, he asserted that its theoretical foundations lay not in any mathematical laws but exclusively in historical materialism and Marxist-Leninist political economy. Soviet statisticians, he added, could fulfill their proper task of aiding the construction of a Communist society only if they "eliminated from statistical theory the last remnants of bourgeois ideas." In the same vein, another speaker declared with amazing frankness that the top-priority function of statistics was not the gathering of knowledge but the reform of society—of course, along Communist lines.

The determination of the official spokesmen to reject *in toto* the mathematical foundations of statistics

[4] V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, International Publishers, New York, 1935, Vol. I, p. 316.

[5] Stuart A Rice, "Statistical Conceptions in the Soviet Union Examined from Generally Accepted Scientific Viewpoints," *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, Harvard University Press, 1952, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1, pp. 82–86.

[6] A German translation of the summary report of the conference, which is the source of all quotations given in the following account of the discussions, was published in *Statistische Praxis* (Statistical Practice) Berlin (East), 1950, No. 11, pp. 175–179.

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ran like a thread throughout the discussions; yet, if any convincing arguments were advanced for such rejection, the conference report does not reveal them. Illustrative of this blind dogmatism was a pronouncement denying that quality control in industry could be considered a statistical method. This was because it represented an application of the theory of probability for which, the speaker blandly proclaimed, there was no room in statistics.

The dénouement of the conference came when Pisarev, after hearing himself repeatedly attacked for his heretical belief in the universalist theory, abjectly came forward and confessed his "gross error." Acknowledging the correctness of Sobol's thesis, he promised to modify his views and to "give an exhaustive criticism of the universal theory of statistics on the basis of Marxist-Leninist classics. . . ."

In his paper referred to earlier, Dr. Rice succinctly summed up the essence of the conference's decisions:

The Soviet theses mean that statistics must prove whatever the supreme expositors of political, economic and social doctrine in the USSR demand that it prove. This is a negation not only of statistics as an objective science but of all scientific thought and method. It is anti-scientific and essentially theological.

Dr. Rice further saw reason to suspect that Pisarev's reported confession was more tongue-in-cheek than genuine. It seemed wholly implausible that Pisarev "underwent a sudden, genuine and complete conversion in consequence of the arguments advanced in the discussion." The same doubt also applied to the other prominent statistical scientists who, along with Pisarev, were found guilty of bourgeois-formalist aberration.[7] Could it really be that the regime, simply through a two-day conference, had succeeded in banning objective scientific reasoning from Soviet statistics?

The Uneasy Aftermath

THAT the answer to this question was something less than an unqualified affirmative became manifest in subsequent developments. True, the regime's ideological sledgehammer technique did, for a time, appear at least negatively successful in deterring Pisarev and his fellow deviators from publicly voicing tabooed universalist views, but at the same time it conspicuously failed to draw from them any prompt and positive demonstration of their supposed conversion to, and support of, the new statistical doctrine laid down at the conference. The regime's chagrin was made clear in an article published in October 1951 by T. Koslov, a leading exponent of the orthodox school, who complained that the deviationists had, since the conference, "remained stubbornly silent instead of honestly admitting and correcting their mistakes." [8]

If the efficacy of the regime's reindoctrination effort still remained dubious at the close of 1951, it showed definite deterioration during 1952. Starting with an article by V. A. Sobol in the February 1952 issue of *Vestnik Statistiki*, the chief spokesmen for the orthodox, or dogmatist, school launched what seemed like a new campaign to bring the still recalcitrant believers in bourgeois statistical concepts into line.[9] The result, however, was not what they hoped for. Pisarev, Nemchinov and other universalists did, indeed, end their "stubborn silence," but they did so not to concur in the reiterated 1950 party statistical line but to counterattack it with surprising vigor.[10]

Thus, the whole debate on the issues supposedly resolved by the 1950 conference was reopened in full public view. The dogmatists had little new to offer in support of their position, and what arguments they did adduce were characterized by the same fuzziness and blind reliance on Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist dogma that had marked the 1950 "discussions."

Koslov, who gave the most comprehensive statement of the dogmatist position, declared for example that statistics could not possibly be accepted as a universal science of method as this would mean its replacement of dialectical materialism as the scientific method for studying reality. He continued:

Statistics is the science of the quantitative changes of concrete historical social phenomena and events. It registers these changes . . . and illustrates the law of social evolution manifested in them . . . [But] the true content of statistical

[7] It is interesting to note that these others included V. S. Nemchinov, a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, who had dared to speak in defense of the chromosome theory of heredity at the August 1948 session of the Soviet Academy of Agricultural Sciences, which established Lysenkoism as the official biological doctrine of the USSR. See Rice, *op.cit.*

[8] T. Koslov and G. Krygin, "Concerning the Journal *Vestnik Statistiki*", *Voprosi Ekonomiki* (Problems of Economy), Moscow, 1951, No. 10.

[9] V. A. Sobol, "The Object of Statistics," *Vestnik Statistiki* (Statistical Gazette), Moscow, 1952, No. 2, p. 23 ff. The other major expositions of the dogmatist position were: T. Koslov, "The Object and Method of Statistics," *Voprosi Ekonomiki*, 1952, No. 4, pp. 54–68; V. Chermenski, "Statistical Science," *Ibid.*, 1952, No. 9, p. 71 ff.

[10] The principal articles stating the universalist views all appeared in *Voprosi Ekonomiki*, as follows: I. Yu. Pisarev, "Object and Method of Statistical Science," No. 8, pp. 54–65; V. S. Nemchinov, "Statistics as a Science," No. 10, pp. 100–16; P. Rabinovich, "Object and Essence of Statistics," No. 11, pp. 103–12; N. Drushinin, "The Content of Statistics as a Science," No. 6, pp. 42–52. (German translations of these articles, as well as those cited in the preceding footnote, appeared in various issues of *Statistische Praxis*, 1952.)

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data cannot be understood without prior appreciation of the character of the phenomena and events to be investigated.

This appreciation, according to Koslov, can only be supplied by historical materialism and Marxist-Leninist political economy.[11]

The dogmatist arguments reached their acme of irrationality when they sought to justify denial of the place of mathematical concepts in statistics. Said Koslov:

It is really quite simple. The pre-conditions on which the law of large numbers is based have nothing whatever in common with the laws of social evolution illustrated numerically by statistics. Society is not a mechanical aggregate in which any number of combinations is possible. Society does not consist of bricks which can be moved from place to place and combined at will.

Similarly, Sobol asserted that those statisticians who regard the theory of probability as the cornerstone of a universal science of statistics would have to conclude that the law of large numbers, and not the law of value, caused price fluctuations in the capitalist economy; or that this same law, rather than biological factors, determines the ratio of male and female births.[12]

In replying to these dogmatist arguments, the universalists led by Pisarev and Nemchinov displayed a judicious readiness to accommodate their critics on certain points but at the same time adhered steadfastly to the basic positions for which they had been attacked in 1950. Thus, while conceding that political economy should provide the methodological basis for statistical research in the socio-economic field, they denied that this implied identical terms of reference or methods.

They further emphasized that both the natural and the social sciences need statistics as a means of studying quantitative relations. The dogmatist attempt to rule natural phenomena out of bounds for statistical research, they declared, was "reactionary scholasticism" tantamount to denying the dialectical relationship of society and nature, not to mention its "unpatriotic" effect in seriously impeding the practical development of Soviet statistics. This would perhaps not be so grave, they suggested, if statistics were not needed to solve problems connected with the fulfillment by individual factories of their production plans.

On the much-disputed issue of the place of mathematics in statistical theory, the universalists came up with a simple but highly ingenious compromise formula. Acknowledging that they had been wrong in regarding the law of large numbers as the main theoretical foundation of statistics in general, they now divided statistics into three compartments—socio-economic, mathematical, and statistics of natural phenomena.

While the law of large numbers, as an expression of the dialectical connection between chance and necessity, held the keystone position in mathematical statistics, it did not, they agreed, hold the same position in socio-economic and agro-biological statistics, the theoretical bases of which were provided by political economy and Michurin's agro-biology.[13] Nevertheless, it was still important even in these fields for the analysis of variation within a group of phenomena under study and for testing the conclusions.

Thus, the new doctrinal debate, which continued until the close of 1952, wound up with the embattled universalists still holding their ground and, even more significantly, speaking out in defense of their views with far greater daring and emphasis than they had in 1950. Undoubtedly this reflected, in part, the beginning of a somewhat less oppressive atmosphere than had prevailed from 1946 to 1950 in Soviet science generally.[14] But it also suggested that Soviet statistical scientists like Pisarev and Nemchinov placed higher value on the objective laws of science than on the subjective commandments of Communist ideology.

A New Chapter?

AFTER the death of Stalin in March 1953, the tendency toward a relaxation of Stalinist ideological oppression of the sciences became more pronounced. The trend reached a climax in the early months of 1954 with the final disintegration of Lysenko's rule over Soviet biology, which had shown the first signs of cracking in late 1952. It was undoubtedly more than pure coincidence, therefore, that a new conference was summoned at Moscow in March 1954, this time under the more impressive auspices of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, to reconsider the decisions of 1950 with regard to statistical doctrine.

[11] Koslov's words represent a generalized restatement of Marx' classical view that "only an understanding of the factors which form the rate of profit enable statistics to undertake a real analysis of wage rates in different periods and countries." Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, Berlin, 1951, Vol. III, p. 268.

[12] See footnote 9.

[13] It was Michurin's agro-biology which served as the starting point for Lysenko's sensational and thoroughly unsubstantiated theories concerning methods of treating seeds to increase crop yields and to effect transformation of plant species.

[14] It is interesting to note that the first criticism of Lysenko's biological theories appeared in the November-December 1952 issue of *Botanicheski Zhurnal* (Botanical Journal), Moscow, just as the debate on statistical doctrine was nearing a conclusion. See Abraham Brumberg, "The Rise and Fall of a Soviet Plant Breeder," *New Leader*, New York, August 9, 1954.

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The entire atmosphere of the conference was vastly different from that of the 1950 conclave. The desire of the authorities to give the gathering a more democratic appearance was evident in the fact that it was attended by 760 delegates from all parts of the USSR, including not only statisticians but mathematicians, economists, engineers, philosophers and medical scientists, who had not been represented in 1950. Instead of two days the conference this time lasted eleven; no less than 60 speakers were heard and 20 papers submitted. The official report clearly took pains to emphasize that this was no rigged proceeding and that the conference's findings were democratically arrived at.[15]

The reason for this changed atmosphere and for the doctrinal revisions which were to come out of the conference quickly became evident. As the official report itself acknowledged, the Central Statistical Administration had in its files a vast accumulation of statistical data which it had not been able to evaluate. This, the conference was told, was because the development of Soviet statistical theory had lagged behind the requirements of practical work—a striking confession when contrasted to the boast of 1950 that Soviet statistics, founded in Marxist-Leninist doctrine, was far superior to the universalist statistics of the bourgeois West.

The conference attributed the lag in theoretical development to the obvious absence of agreement among statistical scientists on matters of doctrine, to the lack of contacts between academic and working statisticians, and to the fact that the work of the CSA had not been subjected to any criticism. Quite clearly, the 1950 conference had only made matters worse in these respects, and it was the task of the present gathering to put the Soviet statistical house in order.

It was not to be expected, of course, that the conference would completely renounce the doctrinal decisions of 1950. On the moot issue of whether statistics was a universal or solely socio-economic science, Pisarev, Nemchinov and others once again upheld the universalist view, but the orthodox spokesmen spouted out even more words than in 1950 to propound the opposing contention. "The majority," said the conference report, "agreed on the concept of statistics as a social science."

This face-saving decision did not prevent the conference from taking a number of leaves out of the "bourgeois" book where it was apparent that the artificial restriction of statistics to the field of social science stood in the way of improving the efficiency of Soviet statistical methods and practice. In 1950 it had been ruled anti-Marxist even to suggest that the social and natural sciences could have anything in common. Now, it was quietly acknowledged that quantitative relationships applying equally to the two fields do exist, and that statistical methods are properly employable in both.

In order to fit this concession into the framework of Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the conference adopted a formula closely resembling that advanced by the universalists in the debate of 1952. Thus, statistics as applied in the field of natural science was designated as mathematical statistics and treated as a branch of mathematics rather than of statistics.[16] This neat piece of semantic legerdemain killed two birds with one stone, for it also made room for the readmission of the previously ostracized mathematical theory of probability and law of large numbers, whose practical application in the field of industrial technology, especially quality control, was now "to be developed and encouraged to the maximum." Indeed, it was even conceded that mathematical methods might be applied to the study of social phenomena as long as abstract mathematical concepts were not substituted for Marxist-Leninist politico-economic analysis.

One might well ask, "What's in a name?" and suggest that all this folderol represents mere ideological window-dressing of extreme irrelevancy. From the Communist viewpoint, however, nothing which serves to preserve inviolate the party dogma is irrelevant. On the other hand, Soviet statisticians may quite understandably claim that a few concessions to Communist ideology are worth making if they serve to win recognition of practical scientific procedures which produce beneficial results.

In retrospect, the conclusion expressed by Dr. Rice in his paper on the 1950 conference represented a remarkably keen look into the future. To quote his words once more:

> **I do not believe that statisticians of free scientific traditions are likely to capitulate to the Soviet theses and the theological orthodoxy upon which they rest. Is it possible, then, to bridge the gulf? It seems to me that an affirmative answer must depend upon a retreat by our Soviet colleagues from indefensible positions.[17]**

The 1954 conference definitely marked at least the beginning of such a retreat, even though its tortured

[15] The official summary of the conference proceedings was published in *Vestnik Akademi Nauk SSSR* (Journal of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR), 1954, No. 8.

[16] To some degree this solution had been foreshadowed in the 1950 conference's recognition of quality control, involving the theory of probability, as a mathematical though not a statistical method.

[17] See footnote 5.

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discussions served to highlight once more the wide gap that separates scientific reason and objectivity from the dialectics of a "class and party science." The point to be stressed is that it is the Communist world which is narrowing the gap, however slightly, by retreating away from the "indefensible positions" of Marxist-Leninist dogma toward a more objective view.

As the admissions made at the 1954 conference clearly demonstrated, this retreat undoubtedly had its main impelling force in pragmatic considerations of Soviet national self-interest. Nevertheless it cannot be gainsaid that a vital contributing factor lay in the resolute, if careful, opposition from within of scientists who refused to be badgered into embracing party dogma at the expense of scientific reason.

The Italian CP

Part I: The Transformation of a Party, 1921-1945

By FULVIO BELLINI

Editors' Note: This is the first of two articles on the history and present status of the Italian Communist Party. The next issue of *Problems of Communism* will carry a report by Giorgio Galli on the present strategy and tactics of the Italian CP.

SINCE its birth in January 1921, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) has gone through many changes in structure, program and leadership. The essential feature of its evolution, however, has been its gradual transformation from a party dedicated to the single goal of carrying out the proletarian revolution in Italy to one whose objectives, policies and strategy are unfailingly keyed to the shifting national power interests of the Soviet Union.

The decisive turning point in this process of change came in 1926 when the original leadership of the party, after bitterly resisting Moscow's efforts to "bolshevize" the Comintern, was finally forced to give way to more pliant leaders, among them Palmiro Togliatti, the present head of Italian communism. The party's subsequent subservience to Kremlin policy and abandonment of its original revolutionary philosophy were measured by its offer of reconciliation to the Fascist Government in 1936 (when Moscow briefly entertained hopes of weaning Italy from Germany), by its pro-German line during the period of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact, and by its policy of full participation in the republican parliamentary government of Italy immediately after World War II.

In many respects the circumstances and events which led to the formation of the PCI were unique among the countries of Western Europe. Unlike the Socialist parties of France and Germany, the Italian Socialists had not allowed their principles of world proletarian solidarity to be swept aside by the tide of national chauvinism accompanying the outbreak of World War I. Instead, their policy throughout the war had been one of strict neutralism. Moreover, although the party had long been predominantly social democratic and reformist in its outlook, a radical trend had begun to develop within its ranks before the war and was already well defined by the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in 1917.

Fulvio Bellini was an official of the PCI from 1945 to 1948 but broke with the party in 1949. He is now editor-in-chief of the monthly review *Il Fronte del Lavoro* (The Labor Front), also of Milan. He is co-author with Giorgio Galli of *Storia del Partito Communista Italiano* (History of the Italian Communist Party), Schwarz, Milan, 1953.

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The Role of Mussolini

BY a curious paradox, one of the foremost contributors to this trend was Benito Mussolini, the later leader of Italian fascism. Amadeo Bordiga, founder and first theorist of the Italian Communist Party, has acknowledged that had it not been for Mussolini's early activity in the Socialist Party and the role he played in developing a revolutionary Marxist wing within its ranks during the period from 1910 to 1914, the Socialist split which gave birth to the PCI in January 1921 might not have occurred.

Bordiga's assessment of Mussolini as a herald of Leninism in Italy is well-founded. First in the columns of *La Lotta di Classe* (The Class Struggle), the weekly organ of the Socialist section of Forli, and later as editor of the central party daily, *Avanti*, Mussolini led an impassioned revolt against the parliamentarian degeneration of Italian socialism. In contrast to the Anarcho-Syndicalists, however, he guided this revolt along the furrow of orthodox Marxism, advancing doctrines strikingly close to the Leninist positions which later became the fundamental theses of the Communist International.[1]

Lenin's greatest contribution to the birth of international communism lay in his activities as both ideologist and actual builder of the Russian Bolshevik Party—a revolutionary party entirely different from the usual workers' parties of the Second International. The working class, in his view, could never become revolutionary without the leadership of a disciplined and trained Marxist party. To provide such leadership, however, the workers' parties must first purge themselves of bourgeois influence by expelling from their ranks the supporters of parliamentary reformism and thus assume a true Marxist and revolutionary character.

No less than Lenin, Mussolini scornfully rejected the reformist theory of the peaceful transformation of bourgeois society and emphasized the necessity of destroying capitalism by resort to extra-parliamentary methods of combat and a violent proletarian insurrection. Like Lenin also, he held that the role of the party should be to provide a small, resolute nucleus of trained revolutionary leaders to direct the struggle of the masses. Rather than a mass workers' party organized on a democratic basis, it was thus to be a revolutionary minority or élite fully conscious of its aims and ready to use any means for their accomplishment.

The Italian Socialist Party of 1910, however, bore slight resemblance to Mussolini's conception of what it should be. The left-wing revolutionary group, of which he became the leading spokesman, was a small minority. The right wing, led by Leonida Bissolati and Ivanoe Bonomi, not only stood for the use of parliamentary methods but even leaned toward ministerial participation in a bourgeois government. The majority center group, headed by Filipo Turati, was also reformist in its emphasis on parliamentary action, but it opposed participation in the government.

Though Mussolini impartially assailed all the Socialist members of Parliament as "flabby, weak men who are caricatured in all the reviews," the prime targets of his attack were the right-wing leaders, Bissolati and Bonomi.[2] At the thirteenth Socialist Party Congress at Reggio Emilia in July 1912, he scored an important victory in obtaining their expulsion from the party on the ground that they had indulged in public manifestations of "reformism."[3] The vote was close, but it reflected a significant increase in the influence of the left-wing group in the party. Mussolini's accession to the editorship of *Avanti* four months later was another sign of the trend.

Just as the revolutionary wing appeared to be on the road to control of the party, the outbreak of World War I brought a sudden and curious metamorphosis in Mussolini's thinking. Whereas he had gone to jail three years earlier for his violent denunciation of the Turco-Italian War, he now deserted *Avanti* to found his own newspaper, *Il Popolo d'Italia*, and launched a vigorous campaign in favor of Italy's entry into war on the side of the Central Powers. This placed him in direct opposition to the Socialists' officially proclaimed policy of neutrality, and the party formally expelled him in November 1914 for "a manifest breach of party discipline."[4]

Mussolini's revolutionary teachings nevertheless had made a profound and lasting impression on the young intellectuals then leading the Socialist Youth

[1] It is interesting to note that Trotsky credited Mussolini with being one of the first European Marxists to hold that the petty bourgeoisie, unable to have its own political autonomy, is forced to oscillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—a concept which formed the basis of Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution". "Où va le National-Socialisme?" (Whither National Socialism?), Paris, 1946.

[2] Quotation is from a speech by Mussolini published in *Avanti* (Forward), Milan, July 8, 1912.

[3] The pretext for Mussolini's expulsion move was the action of Bissolati and Bonomi in openly going to the Quirinal Palace to congratulate King Victor Emmanuel on the failure of an anarchist assassination attempt against him in March 1912. Bonomi subsequently held the premiership on two occasions, first in 1921–22 and again following the Allied liberation of Rome in June 1944.

[4] Mussolini's expulsion was ordered in a motion adopted by the assembly of the Socialist section of Milan on November 24, 1914, and published in *Avanti* the following day.

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Federation, who later were to play an important part in the formation of the Italian Communist Party. Among them was the Neapolitan engineer, Amadeo Bordiga, undoubtedly the most striking figure produced by the Italian Marxist movement.[5] In a series of articles published in *Avanti* during the winter of 1914–15, he denounced the "imperialistic" nature of the war and the collapse of the Second International through "social chauvinism."[6] Bordiga's views implicitly raised the question of founding a new revolutionary international but his ideas in this direction remained vague and ill-defined.

Birth of the PCI

THE success of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia won Lenin and his methods of political struggle many admirers among the Italian masses. At its Sixteenth Congress at Bologna in October 1919, the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) became the first foreign party to join the Third (Communist) International, which had been established at Moscow in March. Bordiga, as leader of the left wing, seized the opportunity to press for the expulsion of the reformist faction headed by Filipo Turati. The Congress, however, chose a middle course proposed by Giacinto M. Serrati, leader of the Centrist group, adopting the revolutionary aim of violent overthrow of the bourgeois state and establishment of a proletarian dictatorship but refusing, in the name of party unity, to expel the reformist wing. Voting for the Centrist motion was the so-called *Ordine Nuovo* (New Order) group of Turin, whose outstanding figures were Antonio Gramsci, Umberto Terracini, Palmiro Togliatti and Angelo Tasca.[7]

Bordiga, however, refused to accept as final the Congress decision sanctioning the coexistence within the same party of his Bolshevik revolutionaries and Turati's Social Democratic reformists. In the columns of the newspaper *Il Soviet*, which he had founded at Naples late in 1918, he began actively campaigning for secession and the formation of a Communist Party excluding the Turati right wing.

In July 1920, Bordiga's position was markedly strengthened by developments at the Second World Congress of the Comintern in Moscow. The Congress adopted a thesis laying down 21 conditions of admission to Comintern membership, the seventh of which stipulated "a complete and absolute rupture with reformism and the policy of the 'centrists'" and specifically called for Turati's expulsion from the PSI. The Italian delegation to the Congress agreed to lay the Comintern conditions before a special PSI congress, but Serrati's Centrists obviously had no intention of supporting them. The Turin "New Order" group, which had sided with Serrati at Bologna, now switched to Bordiga's side. In November 1920 the two groups set up a central office to coordinate their action at the forthcoming special congress.

Thus the lines of battle were already drawn when the congress began its deliberations at Leghorn on January 15, 1921. Despite a strongly worded message from Zinoviev and Lenin declaring that refusal to break with the reformists would violate an essential order of the Comintern, the right and center groups pushed through their resolution against expulsion by an overwhelming 2-to-1 majority. Bordiga then announced the secession of the Communist minority and called a separate meeting on January 21 at the San Marco Theater in Leghorn to establish the new party.

Under the direction of Bordiga and Umberto Terracini of the "New Order" group, the secessionists proceeded to draw up a Communist Party constitution, which declared in its third article that "the proletariat cannot break up nor modify the system of capitalist production . . . without the violent overthrow of bourgeois power." The first Central Committee of the PCI was then elected, with Bordiga, Terracini, Ruggero Grieco, Luigi Repossi and Bruno Fortichiari as its Executive Committee. Gramsci was appointed to the Central Committee, but Togliatti was not among the delegates and obtained no post.

Thus, at the time of its formation, the policies and leadership of the PCI were completely in accord with the desires of the Russian leaders of the Comintern. This situation proved to be shortlived, however. The lack of mass support for the revolutionary movements in Germany, Hungary and Italy between 1919 and 1921, coupled with the growing internal difficulties encountered by the Soviet regime in Russia, led the Third Comintern Congress, which met at Moscow in June 1921, to alter its tactics in favor of a "temporary

[5] This estimate of Bordiga, made by the author and Giorgio Galli in their *Storia del Partito Communista Italiano* (History of the PCI), Schwarz, Milan, 1953, evoked a sharp response from Togliatti. Writing in his own review, Togliatti belittled Bordiga as a "mediocre character" in the early history of the PCI. *Rinascita* (Rebirth), Rome, No. 7, 1953.

[6] *Avanti*, Milan, December 21, 1914, January 6 and January 24, 1915.

[7] The New Order group stood slightly to the left of the Serrati Centrists, differing from them only in regard to the role to be given to the "internal committees of industry" envisaged by the Socialists. The group abandoned the Centrists after the decision of the Second Comintern Congress forced it to choose between expulsion from the party or collaboration with the Bordiga faction.

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conciliation of capitalism" and a resumption of collaboration with the Socialist parties in the form of a "united front." Terracini, representing the PCI at the Congress, opposed the new policy as tantamount to an offer of compromise with the Second International, but he finally had to yield in the face of adamant insistence by Lenin.

Bordiga, however, refused to accept the Comintern directive and succeeded in winning the solid support of the party at the Second PCI Congress in Rome in March 1922. The Bordigist position, which flatly rejected the idea of attempting to secure a mass following by compromising with the Socialists, was upheld by the Congress by a vote of 31,000 to only 4,000 for the rightist opposition headed by Angelo Tasca and Antonio Graziadei. Both Gramsci and Togliatti were among those supporting Bordiga. Presumably as a reward for his support, Togliatti was now appointed to the Central Committee.

Comintern vs. Bordiga

THE Comintern, faced by Bordiga's intransigence, promptly began conspiring against him. In June 1922 Gramsci went to Russia to attend the first meeting of the expanded Comintern Executive (Plenum) and was persuaded by its head, Gregori Zinoviev, to go back on his support of Bordiga's "Rome Theses." Accepting an invitation to remain in Moscow, he became a close colleague of the Comintern leader, who promised him Bordiga's position as head of the PCI if the latter continued to resist the Comintern's united front policy.

Bordiga and his followers now faced a difficult choice between repudiation of their long fight against the Social Democratic trend in the ranks of the Socialist Party and defiance of the Comintern. It was evident to them that Moscow had now abandoned its early leniency toward the free organization of revolutionary trends in the workers' movement and was preparing to "bolshevize" the Comintern, transforming it into a monolithic instrument serving the interests of the Soviet state. Conscious of the backing of the great majority of the PCI Central Committee and the party membership, Bordiga decided to fight.

Thus, the Fourth World Congress of the Comintern at Moscow in November–December 1922 witnessed a frontal clash between the Comintern's Russian leaders and the Italian delegation over the "united front" issue. Zinoviev and Bukharin sharply attacked the PCI leadership and let it be clearly understood that unless Bordiga and his supporters accepted the Comintern's "suggestions" to work for unification with their old Socialist enemies, their fate as the leaders of Italian communism was sealed.[8] Bordiga still refused to yield, but the Congress overruled him by adopting Zinoviev's proposal to set up a Comintern unification committee. Gramsci and Tasca came out against Bordiga in favor of the Zinoviev plan.

Mussolini's seizure of power and his initiation of repressive measures against the Italian Communists considerably simplified the execution of the Zinoviev-Bukharin threat to eliminate Bordiga. The arrest of the PCI Executive Committee was ordered by the Fascist Government, and in February 1923, just after his return from Moscow, Bordiga fell into the police net. Almost at the same time other Communist leaders, among them Grieco, Giuseppe Berti and Edouardo D'Onofrio, were also arrested, but Togliatti was overlooked. The Comintern quickly seized upon Bordiga's arrest as a pretext for designating Gramsci acting head of the PCI Executive Committee. Gramsci, then in Vienna, in turn instructed Togliatti to exercise these functions temporarily.[9]

The Comintern's intervention was the prelude to a long and bitter struggle between the Bordiga faction, which had thus far commanded an absolute majority in the PCI, and the Gramsci faction composed of Terracini, Togliatti, Egidio Gennari and Mauro Scoccimarro. Bordiga's release from prison along with the other arrested Communist leaders in September 1923 removed the reason for the acting direction of the party by Gramsci and Togliatti. However, neither these leaders nor their Comintern backers showed any signs of willingness to restore Bordiga to his former position.

For a time the conflict smoldered, but in May 1924 Gramsci's convocation of a National Party Conference, held secretly at Como, set the scene for a new clash between the two factions. Despite a determined effort by the Gramscists to obtain approval of the Comintern's united front policy, the conference resulted in another victory for Bordiga and the position he had taken in the "Rome theses."[10] The

[8] Selected reports, speeches, and resolutions, contained in *Chetvertyi Kongress Kommunisticheskovo Internatsionala* (Fourth Congress of the Communist International) Petrograd, 1923.

[9] At the time of these developments, Togliatti had gone into hiding and his whereabouts were unknown to the party. In order to find him, Gramsci was obliged to ask the Socialist organ *Avanti* (which still appeared legally although the Communist newspapers had been suppressed) to publish a notice instructing Togliatti "to communicate at once with the Executive Committee of the Party." *Avanti*, Milan, April 12, 1923.

[10] Bordigia obtained the votes of 35 provincial secretaries, four inter-regional secretaries, and the representative of the Communist Youth Federation. Only four provincial secretaries cast their votes for Gramsci.

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Comintern's answer to this new defiance was to push through the appointment, at its Fifth Congress, of a new PCI Central Committee excluding the Bordiga faction. This was followed, at the Fifth Plenum of the Comintern in March 1925, by a blunt demand for the dissolution of Bordiga's group within the party.

Deserted by a growing number of his supporters, Bordiga at last went down to defeat at the Third PCI Congress at Lyons in January 1926. There, the forces of Gramsci and Tasca combined against him, and in the final voting the Bordiga faction was able to obtain only a meager 9.2 percent of the ballots. With all the Comintern's resources and means of applying pressure mobilized against him, the defeat was a foregone conclusion. Bordiga's influence in the party was at an end, although he himself was not expelled from membership until March 1930.

Gramsci's triumph spelled the final victory, within the PCI, of those who were willing to subordinate the needs and interests of the Italian Party to those of the Soviet state as reflected in the dictates of the Comintern.

Togliatti Assumes Leadership

THE Comintern had barely won its victory when the Fascist regime unleashed new and more severe measures of repression against the PCI, culminating in the outlawing of the party in November 1926 and the arrest of Gramsci, Terracini and Scoccimarro, as well as of Bordiga. Togliatti, then in Moscow to attend the Seventh Plenum, once again escaped arrest to benefit from the misfortune of his colleagues. The Plenum appointed him to take charge of the Political Secretariat of the PCI, with Tasca and Grieco as his assistants. First from Zurich and then from Paris, Togliatti began exercising his duties as the actual head of Italian communism.

The first task confronting the new leadership was to reorganize the party's activities in Italy on an entirely clandestine basis. This was facilitated considerably by the experience gained in the three preceding years of semi-illegal struggle, during which a relatively complete underground organization had been built up. Thanks to this head start and a policy of scrupulous caution, the party's efforts achieved significant success during the winter of 1926–27. The secretly-published Milan edition of the party newspaper *L'Unità* reached a circulation of 5,000 copies, which were speedily distributed among the workers as soon as they came off the press. Underground operations likewise made rapid headway in Lombardy, Tuscany, Emilia, Piedmont, and even in Rome and Southern Italy.

The initial period of success did not last long, however. As soon as Mussolini discovered that the outlawed PCI possessed a vigorous and flexible underground organization, he mobilized a swift counter-offensive. The campaign, launched in the spring of 1927, reached new intensity toward the end of the year with the establishment of a special police force known as OVRA (Inspectorate of Public Security), whose sole function was the suppression of anti-Fascist activity. Along with OVRA, a Special Tribunal for Defense of the State was set up to try persons accused of conspiring against the government.

By the spring of 1928, dozens of the PCI's underground leaders had fallen into the police net. The arrest at Marina di Pisa, in March 1928, of the staff of the internal underground center dealt the party's activities in Italy a particularly severe blow from which it took three years to recover. Two months later, the Fascist Special Tribunal tried and convicted a long list of Communist officials, among them Gramsci and Terracini, who both received sentences of more than 20 years.[11]

On top of the disaffection caused within the PCI by the disastrous events in Italy, developments in Moscow now had further serious repercussions in the party leadership. Stalin's conflict with Bukharin over the issue of policy toward the *kulaks* came into the open at the Sixth Comintern Congress, where both Togliatti and Tasca were elected to the Comintern Executive Committee. Tasca, in addition, was named to the standing Secretariat and remained in Moscow. There he took sides with Bukharin and, when the PCI refused to support him, withdrew from the Comintern. The party consequently expelled him in September 1929.

Though more circumspect than Tasca, Togliatti also found himself suspected of "Bukharin-like vacillation" and threatened with the loss of Moscow's support. At the end of 1929, the Comintern's new leaders formulated a plan to replace him as head of the PCI Political Secretariat by Ignazio Silone, the director of the party's clandestine organization. This led to a sharp split in the PCI, with some leaders affirming their loyalty to Togliatti, and others favoring Silone.

Togliatti's luck, however, saved him from the fate suffered earlier by Bordiga. Silone, in precarious health, was confined to a sanatorium in Switzerland, forcing abandonment of the Comintern plan. This gave Togliatti time to stamp out the opposition

[11] The sentences were 22 years and 9 months for Terracini, and 20 years and 4 months for Gramsci. Terracini survived, but Gramsci died in prison in 1937.

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within the party and reestablish his leadership on a firm footing. Three Silone supporters (Pietro Tresso, Alfonso Leonetti and Paolo Ravazzoli) were expelled from the PCI in June 1930, and Silone himself in July 1931. Camilla Ravera, the last member of the opposition group, was sent into Italy on an underground mission and there fell into the hands of OVRA.

Between 1930 and 1933 the PCI center in France made repeated attempts to revive the party's underground activities in Italy without success. One after another, the party officials sent into Italy for this purpose fell into the clutches of OVRA. Some were forced under police inquisition to give information which aided in the arrest of those who followed. Finally, in mid-1934, the party leadership was obliged to recognize the impossibility of continuing any serious underground activity and decided to concentrate its future efforts on propaganda among Italian workers abroad, principally in France and the United States.

Ethiopia and Spain

THE virtual cessation of the PCI's clandestine activities in Italy coincided with Mussolini's preparations for the conquest of Ethiopia. During the first phase of the Ethiopian War, the party took sides with the victims of Fascist aggression and proclaimed itself in favor of "the victory of the Ethiopian people against Italian imperialism."[12] Later, however, after the Italian forces had overwhelmed their ill-equipped opponents and begun a lightning advance on the Ethiopian capital, the PCI suddenly reversed its position and came out with an offer of reconciliation with the Fascist government.

The cause of this astounding *volte face* was not the certainty of Italian victory but a new twist of Soviet international policy. Alarmed at the rise of Hitler in Germany, the Soviet Union was anxious to alleviate this threat to its own security by inducing Italy to enter into mutual assistance pacts with the USSR and France. The PCI's offer of reconciliation, made at the solicitation of Moscow, was intended to promote this objective.[13]

The offer was approved by the Central Committee of the PCI in September 1936 and set forth in a manifesto entitled "For the Salvation of Italy and the Reconciliation of the Italian People." This incredible document, which was written by Togliatti himself and bore the signatures of a number of party leaders who are now members of the Communist group in the Italian Parliament, declared:

We Communists are adopting the Fascist program of 1919, a program of peace, freedom and defense of the workers' interests. Blackshirts and veterans of Africa, we call on you to unite in fighting for this program. . . . We proclaim that we are ready to fight beside you, Fascists of the Old Guard and Fascist Youth, to carry out the Fascist program of 1919. [14]

The PCI proposal, however, was scornfully rejected by Mussolini. It had scarcely been turned down when Moscow's decision, in October, to intervene on the side of the Republicans in the Spanish civil war led the Italian party to abandon all thought of "holding out a friendly hand" to the Fascists, and to enter into the armed struggle against Franco and his German and Italian allies.

The Italian Communists played an important role in Spain both as soldiers and as political leaders. Under the pseudonym of "Alfredo," Togliatti represented the Secretariat of the Comintern in the Spanish Communist Party. Luigi Longo, alias "Gallo," was one of the foremost leaders of the International Brigades along with the French Communist André Marty and the German Franz Dahlem. Other representatives of the Italian Party distinguished themselves in posts of great responsibility, notably Giuseppe di Vittorio (Nicoletti) as Commissar of the Eleventh Brigade and Vittorio Vidali (Carlos) as the leading spirit of the famed Fifth Regiment.

One year after the Spanish civil war had terminated in victory for the Franco forces, the conclusion of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact in 1939 once again brought a sudden gyration in Comintern policy. The PCI, forced to hew to the new Moscow line calling for the cessation of all Communist activity hostile to the Axis Powers, abandoned what efforts it was still making to operate in Italy and switched to a pro-Axis line. After Germany's invasion of Poland precipitated war with Britain and France, PCI agents in

[12] The party's stand was announced in an appeal by the Central Committee in April 1935, *Stato Operaio* (The Workers' State), Paris, No. 4, 1935.

[13] The purpose of the reconcilation move was clearly indicated in a statement published by the official PCI review, *Stato Operaio* (No. 8, 1936), which said: "We desire that Italy conclude mutual assistance pacts with all our neighbors, especially with France, to whose people we are bound by numerous historic ties of culture and congeniality. We desire . . . that our country negotiate a similar pact with the Soviet Union, which is the world's most ardent and persistent advocate of peace. Hitler declares openly that he wants war. . . . The Italian people do not wish to capitulate in the face of the Hitlerian threat."

[14] Documents bearing on this little-known episode in the history of the PCI were published by this author in an article entitled "Riconciliazione coi Fascisti nell'ambito del Regime" (Reconciliation with the Fascists within the Government), which appeared in the magazine *Pace e Lavoro* (Peace and Work), Milan, No. 1, 1955.

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France and the French North African colonies endeavored to spread defeatist sentiment among Italian immigrant workers, while Italian Communist leaders in the United States, notably Giuseppi Berti and Ambrogio Donini, conducted an intensive campaign among Italian-Americans in opposition to President Roosevelt's policy of aiding the European democracies against Hitler.[15]

With the Nazi attack on the USSR in June 1941, the two-year interlude of Communist conciliation toward the Axis powers ended as suddenly as it had begun. At the time of the attack, Togliatti and the headquarters of the PCI were in Moscow. He immediately dispatched orders to the party's external center in southern France to start waging the fight against Germany with all available means and also to reestablish the abandoned internal center in Italy for resumption of the underground struggle against fascism.

At the end of July 1941, Umberto Massola, a 37-year-old former Piedmontese worker and member of the PCI external center, was ordered to return to Italy with the mission of renewing contact with small Communist groups already working there and of coordinating their activities within the framework of party directives. Italy's entry into the war as Hitler's ally in June 1940 had not been popular from the start, and the general public apathy created conditions favorable to the resumption of Communist underground activity.

Massola went to Milan and immediately began laying the foundations for the reestablishment of the PCI within the country. A clandestine printing operation started putting out a small edition of the party newspaper *L'Unità*. Its circulation mounted rapidly, and within a few months it had become an essential instrument for regrouping the party's forces and coordinating efforts to undermine the regime. By the end of 1941, the PCI could once more be regarded as an effective political organization within Italy.

The Overthrow of Fascism

AS the tide of war turned against the Axis in North Africa and the Mediterranean, the internal strength of the Fascist regime began to crumble and attempts at sabotage gradually increased. The PCI, with its disciplined organization, was able to take the lead in rallying the forces of revolt. In the latter part of 1942 and first four months of 1943, a long series of Communist-directed strikes disrupted production in Italian war factories, culminating in a walkout at the giant Fiat plant in Turin. These strikes gave the PCI virtual control of the working masses.

With the fall of Mussolini on July 25, 1943, and the conclusion of a separate armistice between Italy and the Allies on September 8, the Communists emerged as the strongest political force in central and northern Italy. Scores of experienced Communist leaders, released from Fascist prisons and penal islands under the amnesty ordered by the Badoglio Government a month before the armistice, resumed their place in the party and further increased its efficiency. Togliatti, in Moscow, was the mind that shaped the party's policy—a policy of complete flexibility in tactics so long as they served to further the final expulsion from Italy of German military power.

In April 1944 Togliatti returned to Italy, ending an exile that had lasted 18 years. Immediately after his arrival in Naples, he made a report to the National Council of the PCI, calling attention in particular to the drastic change taking place in the status of Italian communism. He declared:

We are no longer a sect of agitators but have assumed the responsibility of a great party.

Togliatti went on to criticize what he called the "sectarian tactics" followed by the PCI at the Congress of Bari in January 1944, when it had joined with the five other participating anti-Fascist parties in demanding the immediate abdication of the king as a prerequisite to the formation of a new Italian government. In a surprising shift of party policy, he declared that the Communists were prepared to collaborate with all groups, including the Monarchists, who were willing to join in the imperative task of the moment—"to drive the Germans from Italy and destroy every remnant of fascism." He added:

The institutional question will be solved after the war. Other questions which are important to the country's democratic development will also be settled after the war. [16]

Thus, April 1944 witnessed the unprecedented entry of Togliatti and other Communist leaders into the monarchist Badoglio Government. Meanwhile, in central and northern Italy, the PCI continued to play a leading role in the partisan struggle against the Germans, at the same time developing and strengthening its political organization. More than 70 percent of the partisan combat units in the field were under Communist control. The party's card-carrying membership, which in 1941 had numbered around 3,000 scattered throughout the world or held in Fascist prisons, burgeoned to 400,000 by the winter of 1944–45 and

[15] The pro-German activities of the PCI during this period were analyzed by the author in an article, "Les Communistes Italiens et le Pacte Germano-Soviétique" (The Italian Communists and the German-Soviet Pact), *BEIPI*, Paris, No. 111, 1954.

[16] *Rinascita*, Rome, Nos. 3-4, 1944.

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continued to expand. The PCI was rapidly becoming a mass party for the first time in its history.

The successful termination of the popular insurrection against fascism, in which the PCI had played a directing role, had its symbolic epilogue in a message of greetings sent in May 1945 by the party leaders for Upper Italy to Togliatti, then about to assume his new title as Secretary General of the Italian Communist Party:

Let us mobilize the entire party for the democratic reconstruction and rebirth of the country. The line of unity, drawn by you, which we have used as a guide in the insurrection, will guide us also as head of the whole people in the work of reconstruction.[17]

The Italian Communist Party, which proclaimed in these terms its ambition to play the leading role in building a new Italy, was thus far different from the party born at Leghorn 34 years earlier. At its inception, under Bordiga, it had been a small group of dedicated Marxist revolutionaries whose goal was the establishment of a workers' dictatorship in Italy through extra-parliamentary struggle. In 1945, under Togliatti, it all but renounced its origins as a "sect of agitators" and aspired to new respectability as a mass party championing the cause of parliamentary democracy.

In all the stages of its evolution, the PCI reflected the changing strategy of international communism, itself the reflection of changes in Soviet communism and of the shifting national interests of the USSR. The party of Bordiga's days thus mirrored the revolutionary zeal of the early Bolsheviks. Bordiga's leadership, however, became an anachronism as the Comintern's Russian high command sought to make the national Communist parties within its fold instruments of Soviet national policy. His defeat and the transfer of power to Gramsci and Togliatti signalled the subjugation of the PCI to this new concept and fixed the pattern for its future development.

The party's role as an arm of Moscow and the flexibility of its tactics in serving the interests of the Soviet Union have continued to characterize its action in the post-war period as the most powerful Communist group in Western Europe.

[17] *L'Unita* (Unity), May 2, 1954.

BOOK REVIEWS

Eight Views of the Chinese Colossus

A Nation Under Pressure

Yuan-li Wu:
An Economic Survey of Communist China,
Bookman Associates, New York, 1956.

Richard L. Walker:
China under Communism: The First Five Years,
Yale University Press, 1955, 403 pp.

Michael Lindsay:
China and the Cold War:
A Study in International Politics,
Melbourne University Press, 1955, 286 pp.

Ronald Hsia:
Economic Planning in Communist China,
International Secretariat,
Institute of Pacific Relations,
New York, 1955, 89 pp.

B. N. Ganguli:
Economic Development in New China,
Indian Council of World Affairs,
Oxford University Press, 1955, 92 pp.

Reviewed by G. F. Hudson

THE five books listed above are diverse both in the nationality of their writers—an American, an Englishman, two Chinese and an Indian—and in their approach to the subject of Communist China. But one overpowering impression may be derived from all of them, the realization that the new Chinese nation has been goaded by its rulers into a condition of intense effort and extraordinary nervous tension. The purely economic studies of Hsia, Ganguli, and

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Wu underscore this point less heavily than the other two books, which deal primarily with the political side of China's new order, but even in the former the frenzied accents of the high-pressure drive for heavy industry keep on breaking into the dry prose of economic analysis. The Chinese people are on the march, to the urgent, maddening rhythm of propaganda drums; the question for mankind is where the march is leading. As Professor Walker, who writes about China as an historian, remarks in the introduction to his book, "the cost of the tremendous task of remaking China in the Soviet image has been unbelievable in terms of human and of cultural destruction." Yet we are only at the beginning of the process.

Lindsay's book is perhaps the most interesting of the five because it is the work of a former admirer of the Chinese Communists who still retains a certain sentimental attachment for them, but who has been unable to swallow the grosser manifestations of Peiping policy over the last five years. Son of a former Master of Balliol College, Oxford, and married to a Chinese wife, heir to a tradition of left-wing humanitarian liberalism, Lindsay joined with the Chinese Communists in the guerilla war against Japan; he was a radio operator at Communist headquarters and was personally acquainted with the top leaders. He saw them as heroic champions of a popular national resistance against foreign conquest, and they seem to have played up to his idea of them; he never seems to have had any comprehension of their fundamental aims. Hence he has suffered a series of painful shocks as the outlines of a real Marxist-Leninist regime have gradually emerged in China, and he is at great pains to explain how it is that the Chinese Communists have become what they always were:

The best explanation of Chinese behavior is that the Chinese leaders may be subjectively sincere in wanting peace and Sino-British friendship but that they operate in a state of emotional and mental confusion in which various widespread influences that tend to make human behavior irrational are strengthened by a faith in the Communist dogmatic system.

It would surely be simpler to say that the "emotional and mental confusion" is inherent in the faith and that Communists everywhere show themselves in their actions to be influenced by what they profess to believe. Like so many other Western liberals, Lindsay took the Communists on the basis of their "popular front" tactical slogans instead of inquiring what was involved in the basic principles of their creed. Even now he indulges in curiously naive remarks such as:

I have not been able to obtain direct evidence about the motives behind Chinese Communist policy at this period [1945–46]. Chou En-lai refused to answer my questions about it in 1949.

Lindsay's book is nevertheless an important document as the self-revelation of a sincere and earnest mind arriving at a reaffirmation of Western humanist values after a prolonged flirtation with a faith whose nature he never really understood.

Where Lindsay is concerned with theoretical arguments and propaganda themes, Professor Walker gets down to the day-to-day practice of communism in China, making extensive use of material drawn from the Communists' own press as well as of testimony of persons who have left China. He has produced one of the most readable, balanced and comprehensive surveys of Communist China that has yet appeared. Of particular value are his analyses of "psychological control"—the conditioning of future cadres—and of the technique of "drives" whereby the population is stirred up and directed toward particular ends determined by the party.

The economic sections of Walker's book are closely related to the political chapters, throwing light on the reasons for the sacrifice of everything else to heavy industry—the cardinal feature of the Chinese economic system, as it has long been of the Soviet. The picture given by Walker has thus a coherence and completeness which is lacking in the more expert economic studies of Wu, Hsia and Ganguli. For though such specialized investigations have their value, the separation of economic and political phenomena is itself a feature of a capitalist society and is hardly applicable where production and distribution depend neither on consumers' demand nor on expectations of entrepreneurial profit, but rather on the will of a political body disposing of the full coercive power of an absolute state.

Hsia's work particularly suffers in this respect; for example, he tells us that in China "as in the Soviet Union, economic welfare is not a top-priority short-run objective" and that, because the Communists are concerned "at this stage" with "developing a strong industrial base for independence and national power," they are "forced to maintain low consumption levels." Yet the fundamental question here is *why* the whole economy is being subordinated as it is to the attainment of "national power," and what the long-term effects will be if the regime continues goading the population to greater efforts with minimal economic rewards by preaching that China is in mortal danger of enslavement by "the imperialists." China could have had an industrialization along quite different lines, with a balanced economic development aided by Western capital, and without

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the privations which must be inflicted in order that she may "starve herself great" (to reapply a phrase which was used of Russia's First Five-Year Plan).

The "heroic" type of industrialization nevertheless has a very powerful attraction for Asians, as is shown in Ganguli's study. In his comparison of Communist development finance with the methods by which a state at war sustains its struggle at the expense of its people's consumption, he approaches the heart of the matter: Communist governments use the techniques of "war finance" because they consider themselves to be permanently at war, and it is only under the psychological conditions of being at war that such an economic system can be operated. The whole economic policy of Communist China is indeed remarkably similar to that promoted not many years ago by the Japanese army under the title of "a high-degree defense state."

This comparison is borne out by the much more thorough and detailed survey undertaken by Mr. Yuan-li Wu, a Chinese economist now working at Stanford University. In the course of his text Mr. Wu remarks:

The theme that national defense is dependent upon industrialization while industrialization must give top priority to defense industries runs through all Communist declarations of policy.

Since China's economic development has started at a pitifully low level, there is little margin for raising the standard of living. Mao's subjects may hope for jam tomorrow, but there is very little jam for them today, and the impatience for improvement which the Communists promoted when they were organizing revolt against the Kuomintang is now branded as counterrevolution.

As Mr. Wu points out, such progress in the material conditions of the masses as has taken place must be attributed mainly to the restoration of peace and order after years of foreign invasion and civil war, with their concomitants of devastation, uprooting of the population, interruption of communications and runaway inflation. This fact is frequently overlooked by travelers sympathetic to the People's Republic, who usually attempt to contrast present conditions with those of the civil war period. If any comparison is to be made of living standards, it should only be with the China of 1937. In any case, satisfactory comparisons are extremely hard to make, for Kuomintang China never reached the stage of being able to carry out adequate statistical surveys on a national scale; though the present government probably has sufficient administrative organization for doing so, its general attitude towards factual truth renders all its figures suspect, and any independent checking of them is excluded, as Mr. Wu notes, by the law which makes disclosure of "vital" economic information a capital offense.

Today the regime's calls for "production-increase and austerity" do not attempt to offer the Chinese people prospects of prosperity in the near future; the Chinese worker is required to console himself for the lack of cheap consumer goods formerly imported from Japan and elsewhere by contemplation of new power stations and steel mills which will enable China to prevail over the "imperialist camp." Such a subordination of the living standards of the people to the increase of national power could, however, have been enforced, as it was in Japan, by a nationalist and militarist regime without fundamental interference with rights of property; what differentiates the Communists' program is the attempt to socialize production simultaneously with the endeavor to build up the armed strength of the state. The two ends are not necessarily in harmony; for example, the recently increased political pressure to eliminate the remaining sectors of private enterprise both in industry and agriculture appears to be in conflict with the government's purely economic aim of maximizing production.

Mr. Wu concludes from the evidence available that:

. . . increasingly ruthless control has tended to generate resistance, stifle initiative, breed inefficiency, and create a ponderous, overdeveloped administrative machinery which at times threatens to break down altogether.

These were phenomena which were characteristic of the Soviet Union's First Five-Year Plan, but despite all the privations and unrest they did not bring about the collapse of Stalin's regime. Communist dictatorship is a system of government which can stand a vast amount of economic failure and discontent. There is nevertheless always the possibility that the strains and stresses of the party's economic policies may produce dangerous cracks in the edifice of the new Chinese state.

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. . . *Plus C'est la Même Chose*

Father François Dufay:
L'Etoile contre la Croix
(Star Against the Cross)
Casterman, Tournai, 1954, 190 pp.

Father Jean Monsterleet:
L'Empire de Mao Tsétung
(Mao Tse-tung's Empire)
Casterman, Tournai, 1955, 210 pp.

Robert Magnenoz:
L'Expérience Communiste en Chine
(The Communist Experiment in China)
Les Iles D'Or, Paris, 1954, 306 pp.

Reviewed by Morvan Duhamel

EVER since the days of World War II, when Mao Tse-tung and his followers were often pictured in the West as simple agrarian reformers, there has been a certain reluctance on the part of many Western observers to recognize the fundamental identity between Chinese and Soviet communism. Mao's early readaptations of Marxist-Leninist theory were viewed as signs of the emergence of an independent, Chinese-type communism less virulent than the Soviet prototype. To such roseate views the record of the first five years of Communist rule in China, as the three French studies reviewed here demonstrate, deals a belated *coup de grâce*.

Father Dufay's *Star Against the Cross* addresses itself to one specific and important aspect of this fundamental identity: the Chinese Communists' war on religion. It is unfortunate, though natural in view of the book's authorship, that it limits itself to exposing the Mao regime's attempts to undermine Christianity, especially Catholicism, in China. Christianity, as an alien faith, has unquestionably suffered most under the Chinese Communist campaign of religious repression; but it is important to know that Chinese Buddhists and Taoists, who outnumber the Christians many times over, have suffered, too.[1] Communism proposes to stamp out *all* religion as the "opiate of the people."

Nevertheless, the book is a valuable contribution to more detailed Western knowledge of the systematic manner in which the Chinese Communists are seeking to wipe out the influence of Christianity in China. Father Dufay, a missionary in China until the Communists expelled him in 1951, has based his book on the experience and observations of 150 Catholic missionaries, mostly French, some of whom were not released or expelled from China until 1954. The book is therefore both authentic and relatively up-to-date.

The insidiousness of the Chinese Communist offensive against Christianity emerges clearly in the Dufay account. Direct attack was avoided in favor of a subtler indirect approach. Two essential elements were the appeal to nationalism in order to isolate Chinese Christians from Western influence, and exploitation of Christian concepts of good citizenship and community service in order to bring the Chinese adherents of the faith "upon secular ground where intervention by the government is justified."

The main instrumentality for achieving the Communist purposes was the "Patriotic Movement." In all Christian communities "patriotic study groups" were set up under the leadership of "progressive" (fellow-travelling) clergymen and actually directed by Communist political agents. Group meetings were held two or three times a week, at which discussion was focused sooner or later upon the alleged role of Christianity as a secret weapon of Western imperialist aggression against China. At first, "they insinuate, soon they suggest openly, then they affirm, and finally they accuse. . . ." And once this insidious idea took hold in the mind of the Chinese Christian, his resistance to the Communist line was hopelessly compromised. To quote Father Dufay, the Christian found himself

. . . no longer free to refuse his support for "purification" of the Church. For the Christian who draws back is condemned by his own statements. On the one hand, he admits that the Church is rotten and harmful to China by reason of its infection with the virus of imperialism; on the other, he refuses to reform it. Hence he confesses that he himself is imperialistic and unpatriotic.

Thus, in a step-by-step process, many Chinese Christians were led to accept a Communist-conceived reformation of the Church!

. . . the patriotic study group changed into a committee on religious reform, then into a Church-directing "Soviet." By an imperceptible transition, the Church passed into the hands of Communist agents.

[1] During 1950–1, the Mao regime unleashed a ruthless campaign to stamp out Taoist societies, executing many members as "counter-revolutionaries". A further anti-Taoist drive was carried out in 1953. The Buddhists have also been subject to sustained oppression, including the confiscation of temples for conversion into workers' "palaces of culture" and the seizure of monastery lands under the agrarian reform program. Richard L. Walker, *China under Communism*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1955, pp. 187–9.

Mr. Duhamel is a French free-lance writer specializing in Communist affairs.

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There were many courageous Christians, however, who refused to lend themselves to the Communist game. Theirs has been the fate of martyrdom, for against those whom it could not suborn and win over peacefully the Mao regime did not hesitate to resort to violence and persecution in its cruelest forms.

In *Mao Tse-Tung's Empire*, Father Monsterleet, another Catholic missionary and professor at the former Jesuit College of Chinku in Tientsin, attempts to cover much broader ground than Peiping's anti-religious policies. Each of his chapters is a careful study of a particular segment of the Chinese Communist program—agrarian reform, education, industrialization, and commerce, to mention only a few. He demonstrates, by relating numerous specific examples, the "sadistic, debasing nature" of the methods employed by the regime in enforcing its will, the attempt to destroy the traditional concept of family, and the Communists' "utter contempt for the dignity of the individual."

In his final chapter, Father Monsterleet draws up an interesting balance sheet of the successes and failures of the Mao regime as he assesses them. On the credit side, he acknowledges that feudalism in China has been ended and real unity and cohesion achieved "for the first time in a hundred years." Military and diplomatic successes have been scored; the army—modernized, disciplined and privileged—has become a source of national pride. The author adds that "semi-colonialism is dead; the Chinese make the laws in China"—a statement that would seem to give Mao's regime credit for something that was already a *fait accompli* before the Communists came to power.

On the debit side, Father Monsterleet sees a number of cracks in the Chinese monolith—"passive resistance of the peasants to collectivization, brigandage in certain areas, local revolts in the South . . . " He adds:

The pace set for the Five-Year Plan has proved too fast, the plans too grandiose. The small volume of trade with the West is delaying the industrialization of the country. . . .

Nor is the inner strength of the Chinese Communist Party itself all that the rapid increase in membership would seem to indicate. This expansion, says Father Monsterleet, has brought in many opportunists who only pretend belief in the party myths, and there is some disillusionment in the party ranks. The resultant apathy and deterioration of party discipline are weakening the regime's hold on the masses, especially in the countryside.

Of the three works under review, Robert Magnenoz' *The Communist Experiment in China* is by far the most ambitious in scope. In Part I (*From Confucius to the New Democracy*) the author traces the historical development of the Chinese CP from its origins to its accession to power with the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949. Part II (*The Chinese CP and the Exercise of Power*) reviews and assesses the first five years of Communist domestic rule; and Part III (*The Chinese CP and Its International Responsibilities*) surveys the Mao regime's action and policies in the external sphere.

The author, who conceals his identity behind a pseudonym, is a career diplomat with a broad knowledge of China and the Chinese, based on twenty years of on-the-spot observation. In the light of this background, it is not surprising that his critical analysis of Chinese Communist diplomacy is the best and most original part of the book. The first two sections, by attempting to cover too much ground in too little space, inevitably suffer from occasional superficiality and over-generalization.

Like Fathers Dufay and Monsterleet, Magnenoz lays heavy emphasis on the ruthless methods of repression which have characterized the Mao regime's exercise of ruling power. He cites figures from the Chinese Communist press acknowledging the execution of 28,000 persons in Kwantung Province alone between October 1950 and August 1951. Describing the terrifying psychological results of this repression, Magnenoz writes:

Informers have given free rein to their imaginations; the masochism of public confessions has blossomed forth in all its needless and demoralizing baseness. The Chinese Communist Party has sown hatred and dissension among families. . . . Propaganda has caused children to turn against their parents, workers against employers, thus activating the class struggle which is one of the purposes of the Communist revolution.

With regard to the peasants, who make up the bulk of the Chinese population, the author points out how the initial lure of land reform proved to be only the prelude to collectivization, which virtually confiscated the land the peasant had so recently received. Because of Mao's decision that agriculture must provide the bulk of the capital for building an industrialized socialist state, the peasant finds himself still subjected "to continual toil without hope of relief."

In the field of Communist China's external relations, Magnenoz devotes special attention to Peiping's ties with Moscow, adducing detailed evidence to refute the thesis of some observers that Mao acts inde-

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pendently of the Kremlin. The author also takes emphatic issue with the corollary view that Mao's success in China has set up a rival center of Communist leadership at Peiping, which vies with Moscow for the allegiance of the other Communist parties of Asia. He writes:

The results of Sino-Soviet cooperation have certainly had a profound effect on the orientation of the Asiatic Communist parties; all their leaders have turned toward the capital of world communism, upon which they now rely for the realization of their own ambitions.

Turning to Chinese Communist diplomacy *vis-à-vis* the Western powers, Magnenoz sees it as characteristically blunt and maladroit. To mention just one example, in January 1950, just when the French National Assembly's Committee on Foreign Affairs had pronounced itself in favor of recognizing Mao's government, Peiping abruptly extended recognition to Ho Chi Minh's Communist regime in Indochina, thus destroying any chance of French recognition. Such arbitrary acts, says Magnenoz, spoiled Peiping's chances of establishing relations with some of the Western powers—"relations which perhaps would not have been very cordial but would have been undeniably useful to China."

In his conclusion Magnenoz makes a calm and considered effort to assess the significance of the Communist revolution in China as a phase in the timeless flow of Chinese history. Even if the Communists appear firmly entrenched in political power, he writes, their revolution

. . . is nonetheless but an episode in the march of the Asiatic continent toward its own emancipation, not—as claimed by a glib propaganda—from occidental tutelage, but from the handicaps which weigh upon the peoples of Asia by reason of their own ancient civilizations.

China has turned to communism because it seemed "the shortest road to becoming a modern state" in the material sense. In so doing, China has closed its eyes to the price it must pay—"the loss of its independence" to Moscow and "a multiplication of the burdens and unhappiness of its people."

The old tyranny of the Kuomintang police state has been replaced by a far more ruthless Communist terror, the violence of which is profoundly disturbing to those who have always looked upon Chinese culture and civilization as one of the riches of humanity. That the Communists have had to resort to terror, however, is a significant confession that they themselves "know their weaknesses and recognize that they are not solidly entrenched."

NOTES AND VIEWS

Recent Studies on Communist Affairs

GREAT BRITAIN

Government and People in the Soviet Union Totay, by W. J. Kolarz, in *International Affairs* (London), October 1955.

A comprehensive review and interpretation of Soviet policies since Stalin's death. Mr. Kolarz, who is known for his authoritative studies of Soviet nationality policies, moves briskly from topic to topic, covering virtually the entire gamut of post-Stalin developments from Malenkov's economic reforms to the renewed campaign against "survivals of capitalism," notably religion and "hooliganism." He is convinced that "on the whole the post-Stalin regime has betrayed the hopes both of the citizen who is longing for greater personal security and for an improvement in his material situation, and of the peasant who aspires to a greater control of the soil which he cultivates." The only segment of the population which has benefited substantially from the actions of the new govern-

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ment are the artists and intellectuals, who have been granted some respite from the regimentation of culture instituted by Stalin's *arbiter elegantiarum*—Andrei Zhdanov.

Undoubtedly a number of the new regime's measures have been welcomed by the Soviet citizen—in particular those designed to lift the atmosphere of fear that dominated the population during Stalin's reign. Yet many such measures have been supplanted by new steps imposing further hardships on the Soviet masses (*e.g.*, concessions to the peasantry were followed by the tightening of political controls in the countryside and by the launching of the "virgin lands" campaign, which was assigned economic priorities detrimental to Malenkov's consumer goods program).

Most important, the new policies have in no way altered the basic structure of the Soviet system:

There is still no rule of law in the Soviet Union; everything depends on the verdict, not to say whims, of a small clique of people, or rather on the outcome of the struggle between several cliques, a struggle in which the people itself is a powerless onlooker.

In Mr. Kolarz's view, however, the future may bring interesting developments. The fact that the regime has felt it necessary to appease various groups within the bureaucracy as well as within the population at large, the numerous revelations of industrial and agricultural fiascos, all testify to a discontent which even the most "monolithic" of all the monolithic states has not been able to suppress. Of greater significance, "at the close of the fourth decade of its existence the Soviet government has become aware of its failure to create a new man and a new morality." The tenacious persistence of religious fervor and the deepening interest in Russian classical literature among some segments of the Soviet population, contrasted with the drunkenness, hooliganism, and other manifestations of social disorganization among less stable elements, prove that "Soviet communism finds itself in a state of moral crisis which may turn out to be ultimately more important than the confusion provoked by political rivalries or the chaos on the agrarian front." Many people, says Mr. Kolarz, imagine that the Soviet regime must survive simply because it has not crumbled up to now. And yet:

. . . the ups and downs of Soviet policy since Stalin's death . . . make it less difficult now to perceive an eventuality in which the Soviet Communist Party would lead toward disintegration. Then new unknown factors would of historical necessity come to the forefront of Russian politics.

A. B.

AUSTRIA

An Austrian Sees Russia (a series of six articles), by Oscar Pollak, *Arbeiterzeitung*, Oct. 21, 23, 26, 28, 30, Nov. 1, 1955.

Hundreds of journalists have visited the Soviet Union in recent times and have reported on their impressions and experiences. What distinguishes the current account from the majority of others is perhaps not so much the itinerary of the journey, but rather the personality of the author. Oscar Pollak, editor-in-chief of the influential Viennese Social Democratic newspaper, *Arbeiterzeitung*, saw the USSR from the vantage point of a trained observer, of a confirmed socialist, and of an Austrian with memories of the Soviet occupation still fresh in his mind.

As an Austrian, he was pleasantly surprised by the warm reception and genuine friendliness shown him by the people he met, high-placed officials and ordinary citizens alike. Their attitude was strikingly different from that of the recent Soviet "occupiers" of Austria.

Viewing the USSR as a socialist, Mr. Pollak naturally looked for evidences of socialism in the Soviet system. To his disappointment he found almost none, and gradually whatever illusions he may have had were shattered. Co-determination of workers and managers in industry? Non-existent. Generous social benefits? Only for privileged classes of officials and workers, while the vast majority of unskilled laborers, "inactive" persons (such as housewives), and old people have no protection at all. Election of collective farm officials? One whom the author met, the chairman of a huge collective farm in Uzbekistan, boasted that he had held his post year after year; his annual "re-election" is a mere formality. The author comments:

We the socialists in Austria, in Western Europe, have gained as much and even more for the working man without depriving him of his freedom.

Other aspects of the Soviet scene left a lasting impression on the author's mind.

First, he noted signs of the USSR's effort to enhance its role as an Asian (as well as European) power: for example Moscow University was training over a thousand students from various Asian countries, with the obvious purpose of reinforcing the bridge to Asia.

The author was also struck by the bigness which characterizes most creative efforts in the Soviet Union, from football stadiums to canals, subways and apartment houses. More often than not, this bigness is

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concomitant with ostentatious architecture and eclectic design—the sorry result of the Stalinist notion that all things Soviet, including construction work, must express the achievement of "socialism" in grandiose fashion.

The author observed strict social taboos in operation, "protecting" people from treading on dangerous political ground. In Tiflis, for example, no one dares to mention the fact that Georgia once had an independent socialist—but non-Communist—government which was crushed by the Red Army. In Sochi one does not ask questions about the late Joseph Stalin's vacations in the area. And nowhere in the Soviet Union does one discuss forced labor camps or the system which created them.

Mr. Pollak saw a number of things which impressed him positively: great industrial plants, schools, hospitals, theaters, the giant *Pravda* printing plant, and much beautiful scenery. But in his concluding remarks he sums up his memorable trip in these words:

The skyscrapers, construction performances, the collective establishments, all that is enormous; but man is nothing at all there. He is not valued. He does not exist. That is the essential fact of life without democracy. That is the relative equality of life under the Soviet system, for which the Soviet citizen has to renounce his freedom.

SWITZERLAND

After a Recent Visit to Poland (series of 3 articles) by Ernst Halperin, in *Swiss Review of World Affairs*, October–November–December, 1955.

Mr. Halperin, the *Swiss Review's* expert on Eastern European affairs, has written one of the most interesting first-hand reports on Poland to appear in recent months. Relatively unhampered by travel restrictions and apparently thoroughly familiar with Poland's political history and current problems, he knew where to look and what to look for. His impressions, lucidly and objectively drawn, are a compendium of factors of strength and weakness in the present Polish communist regime and in the Polish Workers Party (the CP in Poland).

Warsaw, says the author, has achieved certain successes which even opponents of the regime could not contest. Cases in point are the establishment of Poland's Western boundaries along the Oder-Neisse line, the reconstruction of Warsaw, and the regime's industrialization policy. The author's travels led him through the newly acquired provinces and convinced him that economically as well as politically the resettlement program has been successful, even if the pseudo-scholarly attempts to justify the occupation on historical grounds have taxed the facts considerably.

Taking their cue from Moscow, Polish Communists have allowed greater latitude in the fields of literature and the arts, and in the wake of last summer's "summit" conference at Geneva have suspended the hate-the-West campaign. These moves, however, reflect weakness rather than beneficence on the part of the regime. The author believes that such steps away from militancy have created a crisis for the party, depriving it of the targets—*i.e.*, the bourgeois remnants within the society and "capitalist aggressors" without—against which battles must be waged and the party ranks tightened. He found that both in and outside the party this relaxation of pressure has fed the ever-present fires of nationalism which, in Poland's case particularly, are intimately bound up with outright hatred or at least deep resentment toward Soviet Russia.

The most serious blow to Communist Party discipline was struck by the visit of Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin to Belgrade and their concomitant retraction of charges against Tito. Mr. Halperin found Polish Communists greatly confused on the subject, and largely dissatisfied with Khrushchev's explanation that the entire affair had been Beria's doing. After the visit to Belgrade, rumors immediately began circulating that the disgraced former Party Secretary Wladyslaw Gomulka, who alone of Polish Communist leaders had protested against the Cominform resolutions on Tito, would be recalled to power. The Central Committee last July hurriedly passed another set of resolutions condemning Gomulka's deviations, but the rumors and rumblings continued. The author encountered a certain desire for emulating Titoist policies both in a recent party resolution looking toward greater freedom of operation for factory directors, and in unofficial talk about the feasibility of applying a modified market economy to the Polish scene.

Confusion in the ranks of the Polish Communists has been compounded further by recent moves toward a reinterpretation of the history of the party. The first move, as might be expected, came from Moscow. Apparently without the knowledge of the Polish regime, the new edition of the Soviet Encyclopedia came out with the startling declaration that the dissolution of the Polish CP in 1938 had perhaps been "unjustified." At the time the Communists had attributed the disbanding of the party to alleged police infiltration of the Polish CP, as revealed in the course of the famous Moscow purges. Virtually

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the entire leadership of the Polish party had fallen from grace, and several had mysteriously disappeared. The Encyclopedia's statement threw Warsaw into obvious confusion. To date the Central Committee has avoided a direct statement on the issue. However, the party organ, *Tribuna Ludu*, recently published 18 photographs of past party leaders, including several who had disappeared after the Moscow purges. The author cautiously speculates that these feeble attempts to rehabilitate some of the victims of Stalinism might conceivably lead to a revaluation of the roles of Trotsky and Bukharin themselves. Unlikely as this prospect seems (also to Mr. Halperin), it is easy to see why there should be confusion and uncertainty in the ranks of the Polish Workers' Party today.

The author found disaffection and even opposition to the regime among parts of the intelligentsia and among the broad masses. Such opposition was not organized and represented no immediate threat to the regime, but it must worry the Communist leaders. Young people were no longer impressed by the slogan, "we build for the future"; even members of Communist youth and student organizations seemed to feel a longing for an end to austerity and a chance to enjoy life *now*.

Organized opposition is extremely difficult in a totalitarian county, but in the agrarian sector at least, the stolid, determined resistance of the peasants to collectivization has been very effective. As a result the party's Central Committee was forced to announce what amounts to an indefinite postponement of the collectivization drive. Few peasants, however, seemed impressed by this gesture. The author left convinced that nothing less than a complete abandonment of the principle of collectivization could regain the peasantry's confidence in the government.

ITALY

Regime Comunista e Criminalita nell 'U.R.S.S. (The Communist Regime and Criminality in the USSR) by U. A. Floridi S. I., *Civilt'a Cattolica*, Rome, November 5, 1955.

CRIME and criminal justice in the USSR constitute one of the most interesting and at the same time least easily traceable aspects of Soviet society. Treatises and public discussions on the subject are rare, statistics are unobtainable, and except for occasional newspaper reports or the testimony of defectors, the extent of the problem remains a closely guarded secret.

Still, the author of the present article has marshalled enough evidence to put the recent Soviet amnesty decrees and talk of a liberalization of the criminal code into proper perspective. The decrees, he shows, may at best mitigate slightly the enormous injustices committed in the name of law against entire populations, but they were not designed to undo the original injustice nor to erase the stigma of criminality from the heads of the victims.

As for a new criminal code, the promises of the regime remain unfulfilled. Almost three years ago, shortly after Stalin's death, Malenkov solemnly promised a reformed and unified code "within a month," but no act has yet redeemed this pledge. (At present the various Soviet republics have separate codes; all, however, are based on the RSFSR model and are usually referred to collectively as the "Soviet criminal code.") While there has been some sentiment in Soviet juridical circles for easing the penalties for certain crimes and even abolishing the catch-all "principle of analogy," no such modification is yet indicated; under the latter principle, adopted in 1922, punishment for acts not specifically covered in the criminal code is permissible if these acts are held to be "analogous" to other offenses for which penalties are prescribed by the law. And even the most "liberal" Soviet lawyers have not dared to suggest abolishing the security police or forced labor institutions which play a key role in the administration of Soviet justice.

From the point of view of Marxist ideology, the course of development of Soviet criminal justice stands in sharp contrast to the original theory. Communist doctrine has held that criminality is largely an outgrowth and result of capitalism, that with the latter's destruction crime and the apparatus for its punishment would disappear along with other oppressive institutions of government. Yet more than three decades of Soviet rule have brought neither a decline in crime nor the slightest trend toward the "withering away" of criminal law. On the contrary, the Soviet state has experienced successive waves of crime, while the low living standards and shortage of consumer goods have given rise to extensive black marketeering, petty larceny, corruption, and widespread evasion of state regulations.

These many factors negate Communist claims of social injustice and indirectly testify to a continuing undercurrent of disaffection and unrest in the USSR.

L. L.

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Correspondence

Editors' Note: At the suggestion of a number of readers of this publication, we are inaugurating a new section, designed to provide a forum for discussion between readers and authors, and among readers themselves, on various matters touched upon in this publication. Letters should be no longer than 300 words, and can be addressed either to the Editors, *Problems of Communism*, U. S. Information Agency, 1776 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington 25, D. C., or to the nearest office of the United States Information Service.

WHENCE STALINISM?

Allow me to dispute the assertion (both in your excerpt from L. Schapiro's *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy* and in R. Thompson's book review in Issue 6, 1955) that "the origin of the Communist autocracy is . . . to be dated from some point in the first five years of Bolshevik rule."

As far back as 1903, Lenin's insistence that the Russian Social Democratic Party be limited to professional revolutionaries, as well as his bitter struggle against the Menshevik faction led by Martov, showed his determination to use any means to seize and hold power. When the Social Democratic Party Congress ended in an uproar that year, split into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, Lenin came to the conclusion that he could no longer work with his former Menshevik comrades on the editorial board of *Iskra*. Formal identity with the party never interfered with his plans because he retained his own Bolshevik center within the organization. Lenin's group never felt bound by the principles and practices of the parent organization when it suited its purpose to violate them.

It was at this time that Trotsky pointed out that Lenin's so-called "democratic centralism" meant that "the organization of the party substitutes itself for the party, the Central Committee substitutes itself for the organization, and finally the dictator substitutes himself for the Central Committee." Plekhanov also wrote, "The ultimate aim of all this will be that everything will revolve around a single man who will . . . concentrate all the power in himself."

Lenin's followers used armed holdups in Russia to raise money for their activities . . . By 1908, Lenin's . . . tactics . . . had lost him the support of Maxim Gorky and that of leading writers and theoreticians who had hitherto followed him. In other words, shortly after Lenin's concept of party organization was formulated and expressed, its logical consequences were apparent to keen observers. The tragedy is that 53 years later, otherwise intelligent people either claim they don't know what communism is, or think something went wrong with the Russian Bolshevik regime sometime after it seized power in 1917.

Philadelphia, Pa., USA — **Walter R. Storey**

Mr. Thompson replies: A reading of Mr. Schapiro's concluding chapter [of which only a small excerpt was reprinted—*Ed.*] will show that the author goes back one year further than Mr. Storey himself in dating Lenin's germination of the later Communist autocracy. Referring to Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* and other early writings, Mr. Schapiro states:

Lenin had first formulated his doctrine on the organization of the Social Democratic Party in 1902 . . . This plan, though designed for the purposes of revolution, was not substantially altered after the revolution had been accomplished. It was not, however, until 1921, with the development of the party Secretariat and Orgburo, that it began to be put into practice.

This view, with which I certainly concur, suggests that the difference between Mr. Schapiro and myself on the one hand and Mr. Storey on the other may be simply a difference between "Western" and "Chinese" methods of calculating age. The Chinese method and Mr. Storey count from the moment of conception (1902–03); the Western world and Mr. Schapiro count from the moment of birth (1917–21). What "went wrong" between 1917 and 1921 was the eruption into society at large of a principle that had previously been confined to the Bolshevik Party.

ACCOLADES

I have read with interest, and, let me add, with profit, the articles on current Soviet policies and the Soviet Union in Issue No. 3, Vol. IV . . . I can rely upon its contents for some very good analyses of international events and policies, based on background information and documentary material relating to the Communist countries.

I will look forward with interest to the future issues of the publication.

Poona, India — **N. R. Deshpande, Head, Dept. of Politics, University of Poona**

I wish to thank you for sending me your publication, which discusses different aspects of communism in an astute and interesting way. I wish to congratulate the editors of a publication which is a keen study of the ideological and social problems of our times.

Cuzco, Peru — **Augustin Tamayo**

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In Forthcoming Issues of Problems of Communism

"Freedom of Expression": The Soviet Press, *by Leo Gruliow*
Censorship in the USSR—A Documented Record, *by Merle Fainsod*
Trade Unions in Communist China, *by Arthur H. Steiner*
Forced Labor under Mao, *by Karl Wittfogel*
New Trends in Soviet Labor Legislation?, *by Jerzy Gliksman*
Soviet Orientalism and the Communist Line in Asia, *by Walter Z. Laqueur*

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